

THE SPIRITUAL SACRIFICE:

OR, A TREATISE,

Wherein several weighty Questions and Cases,
concerning the Saints communion with
GOD in Prayer, are propounded; and
practically improved.

By Mr. *Alexander Pitcarne*, Minister of the Gospel
at *Dron in Strath-Ern*.

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Jam. 5. 16. — The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.
Joh. 14. 13, 14. Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, &c.

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A summary account of the principal purposes, questions, and cases spoken to in this Treatise.

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Concl. 5. We may not draw nigh to God but in Christs name. 558

Concl. 6. But in Christ we may draw nigh with confidence.

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Its not presumption, but a duty, to call God, Father.	ibid.	Concl. 3. There is an appropriation of works and attributes; but not exclusive.	ibid.
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Though we be children, yet if we know not our state, whether may we in truth, and without a lye, call God, Father?	564	Concl. 6. In singling out any one of those glorious persons, we may reflect upon, and improve the appropriation of works and attributes.	ibid.
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conveighing all good to the Saints, [from the Father, through the Son, and by the holy Ghost] doth	577	There may be a total suspension of gracious influences as to prayer, and other particular performances.	589
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A two-fold deadness and indisposition ; one privative, by the departure of the quickening and strengthening influence of			

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Gras, &c. 9. not watching the heart; 10. nor guarding the outward senses; 11. taking unreasonable times for performing these duties; 12. dislike, omission and want of frequency; 13. a giving way to dislike and superficial way of performance; 14. ill company.

mayest, while indisposed, have recourse to a set form; and then, 11. let frequency supply the want of continuance and enlargement; 12. whatever success thou meetest with, yet leave not off, but still follow on to seek the Lord in his Ordinances till thou find him; do not faint nor weary, for, &c. 620

Positive directions and remedies,

1. strengthen and fortifie the heart with the cordial of love; 2. let us rouse up and awaken our sleepy hearts; 3. let us beg the quickening presence of the Spirit of Christ, bewailing more the want thereof, than the want of his consolations; 4. let us diligently mark and observe when the Spirit draweth nigh, and when he withdraweth; 5. When we set upon any duty, let us renew our resolutions to hold our hearts fixed at the work; 6. In the intervals of prayer, let us give our selves unto holiness; [1. do not stint thy self to such a measure of holiness; 2. imitate the best examples; 3. converse much with the Saints; 4. frequent the Ordinances diligently; and, 5. be diligent in thy particular calling.] 7. arrest thy heart at the present exercise and work; 8. remember, 1. the greatness and excellency, 2. the goodness and bounty, 3. the presence and all-seeing eye, and, 4. the holiness, justice and terrors of him with whom we have to do; 9. use such a gesture as may be most helpful to raise the heart; 10. when

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TO THE
R E A D E R.

I Am not very anxious, nor shall I now spend many words for satisfying those, who (knowing how the most part of my time hath been employed) have told me, they did not expect to see me first appear upon such a subject. But, for thy satisfaction, Christian Reader, I shall briefly show the occasion of writing, and now publishing this Treatise; forbearing, at this time, to give an account of my former Studies, and whether or not any (a) (a) Gen. 38. Sarah hath drawn back his hand, while this Pharez hath broken forth. 29, 30. Having (not long after the Lord called me to the Ministry) made choice of our blessed Lords fare-well Sermon, Joh. 14. &c. (that sweet and excellent portion of Scripture) to be the ground and subject of that Doctrine I was to preach to this people every Lords-day in the fore-noon, (reserving for the afternoon some word of warning, reproof, &c. as the Lord would direct me, and their need of that 14. Chapter, which contain such an ample and full promise concerning the success and return of prayer, (as a most powerfull motive to the serious and constant practice of that duty, and as a reviving cordial and notable encouragement under all our tryals and afflictions) I resolved to stay a while on that excellent and usefull Theme, making choice of futeable Texts for unfolding the several particulars which belong to that head; not having then the least thought to publish these Sermons; especially considering, that so many able Divines had already laboured in that field: but when I observed my Meditations to pitch on those things I had not met with in those Authors, I looked upon that as an invitation to prosecute that work, and to write at length what I purposed to deliver, and not to mark only some brief notes (as my custom for the most part is) of what I was to enlarge in the Pulpit. And having brought that work to some close,

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though I was conscious of my own weakness, and not ignorant how critical this luxuriant age is; yet I did at last give way to the publishing of it, when I considered, that the times call for such a Piece; (though performed with greater dexterity) having also met with some invitation and encouragement from some who occasionally heard, and others who had seen some of these Sheets.

So much briefly concerning the rise and design; and having in the subsequent Preface, spoken a little of the excellency, necessity, usefulness, singular advantages, success and fruits of Prayer, which is the subject; I shall now only offer some few advertisements concerning the Treatise itself. And, 1. since few or none (whom I had seen or could hear of) have handled, at any length, those questions that belong to the nature of Prayer, I have insisted on these the more largely, (not leaving them without some practical application) Part first; and as to the rest of the Treatise, I have but briefly touched such particulars as have been more fully prosecuted by others. And thus, 2. since a great part of Mr. Cobberts discourse of Prayer, is spent upon the qualifications of that spiritual Sacrifice, I have, Part second, only in a word, named those he insisteth on, adding some few, with a more full explication of that faith, required Jam. 1. 6. since I conceived not only him, but others who had spoken to that case, not to insist on that which is the main importance thereof; 3. As to the cases propounded, Part third, these are but few, and I have only insisted on the first two, as being most usefull and material; and the third (I might also add the second, as belonging to this head, yea and the first also, except what the learned Mr. Cobbet hath offered for clearing of it) hath scarcely been named by any practical Divine I have perused. As to the kinds of Prayer, ~~scilicet~~ ^{scilicet} faculatory and more ~~conventiva~~ ^{conventiva}, closet Prayer and publick, extraordinary and ordinary, set-forms and extempore, &c. I have not descended to these; as for other reasons, so because the judicious Mr. Gurnal in his Christian Armour. Part 3. hath lately handled these (except the last we named) very accurately.

As to the fourth Part. concerning the success and answer of Prayer, the first Table will give thee an account of the particulars there handled: but what these two great Divines, Mr. Gee and Mr. Goodwin, have at so great length delivered in two compleat Treatises, the one Concerning the return of Prayer; the other Concerning the reasons of Gods hiding himself from his peoples prayers, grounded on his promises; and of his seeming, by his providences, to answer the prayers which are contrary thereunto, I have in few words summed up; propounding the chief heads of their
large

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large Discourse, with some additional observations, in six or seven Pages it is then far from my thoughts to render the labours of others who have written before me, on this excellent and most comprehensive head, useless; but their Works will be necessary to supply my defects and weakness; yet I have not altogether omitted any thing I conceived necessarily to belong to the present Subject.

If it be askt, whether I now offer these Sermons as they were preach'd? Ans. There will be found no considerable alteration, as to the practicall part, except that I did then enlarge some particulars and insist longer upon them, when I conceived the need of this people so to require; but that defect is here supplied with addition of several polemick Questions (especially Part 1.) and Citations, which had not been pertinent for such an auditory, nor from such a place; however usefull School-debates may be to the learned and judicious, yet to the multitude they prove but a beating of the air; and therefore, though they may invite and delight an intelligent Reader, (and the unlearned may pass them over and go to that which is more profitable) yet the Preacher would minde all his hearers, especially the most rude and ignorant, (for others might better provide for themselves) that when he is to give an account of his stewardship, he may be able to say, with the Apostle, That his preaching was not with the enticing words of mans wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 1 Cor. 2. 4. and, That in the Church, he did rather speak five words to the capacity of his hearers, then ten thousand they did not understand, 1 Cor. 14. 19.

As to the errors in printing, these I observed by a cursory view, are so many, that I dare not under take to give a perfect catalogue; but let me intreat thee, before thou read, to correct with thy pen these which I have here set down, as being most material; especially that blasphemy in the Preface, Page 2. where in stead of justice, thou wilt find injustice ascribed to the holy One of Israel. As to the marginal citations, I had not time to compare them with the Authors; and I did the rather forbear that task, because there be several Authors I perused in writing, which I have not now beside me (for this small Treatise hath lien in the Press these two years almost, the Printer having met with some diversions) therefore I have only corrected some few errors, (or, shall I say, non-sense) in the matter: but as to the places cited, thou wilt find one and the same passage made use of (some few pages only interjected) with a divers citation, and the Authors names sometimes so mangled, that hardly wilt thou be able to conjecture who they be, as Pet. art. 8. Jos de, for Pet. a S. Jos. ide. habet for Bernard, Aug. just. for August. Calv. for Calvinus.

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vius, Rannerius for Rainerius; thou wilt also find some imperfect citations; the Author named, but no place designed, or the Book, but not the chapter or question: sometimes also there is no letter in the page to direct thee to the citation in the margin, and at other times it pointeth out the wrong place; which the judicious Reader will easily perceive, and may correct. As to the numeral figures on the several pages, there are so many mistakes, that it were not easie to sum them all up; but the most observable is, that from page 344. to page 649. there is an hundred less then the just number; but to prevent confusion, I have in the tables supplied what was wanting, and have followed the number wherewith the page ought to have been marked. Thou wilt also now and then find some mistake in the inscription of the pages, and that the designation of the Part, Chapter and Section is wanting, and that in the page the several purposes are not distinguished with their proper paragraphos. Thou wilt moreover often find least for left, and in the first seven or eight sheets the particle to, once and again, superfluously added, in which the Printer made use of that copy (having two) I did not write nor revise. As for literal mistakes, wrong pointing, &c. the (b) Poets apology may have place:

(b) Horat. de
art. poet.

Sunt delicta tamen quibus ignovisse velimus:
Nam neque chorda sonum reddi, quem vult manus & mens,
Poscentique gravem per sæpe remittit acutum:
Nec semper feriet quodcunque minabitur arcus.

E R R A T A.

ERRATA.

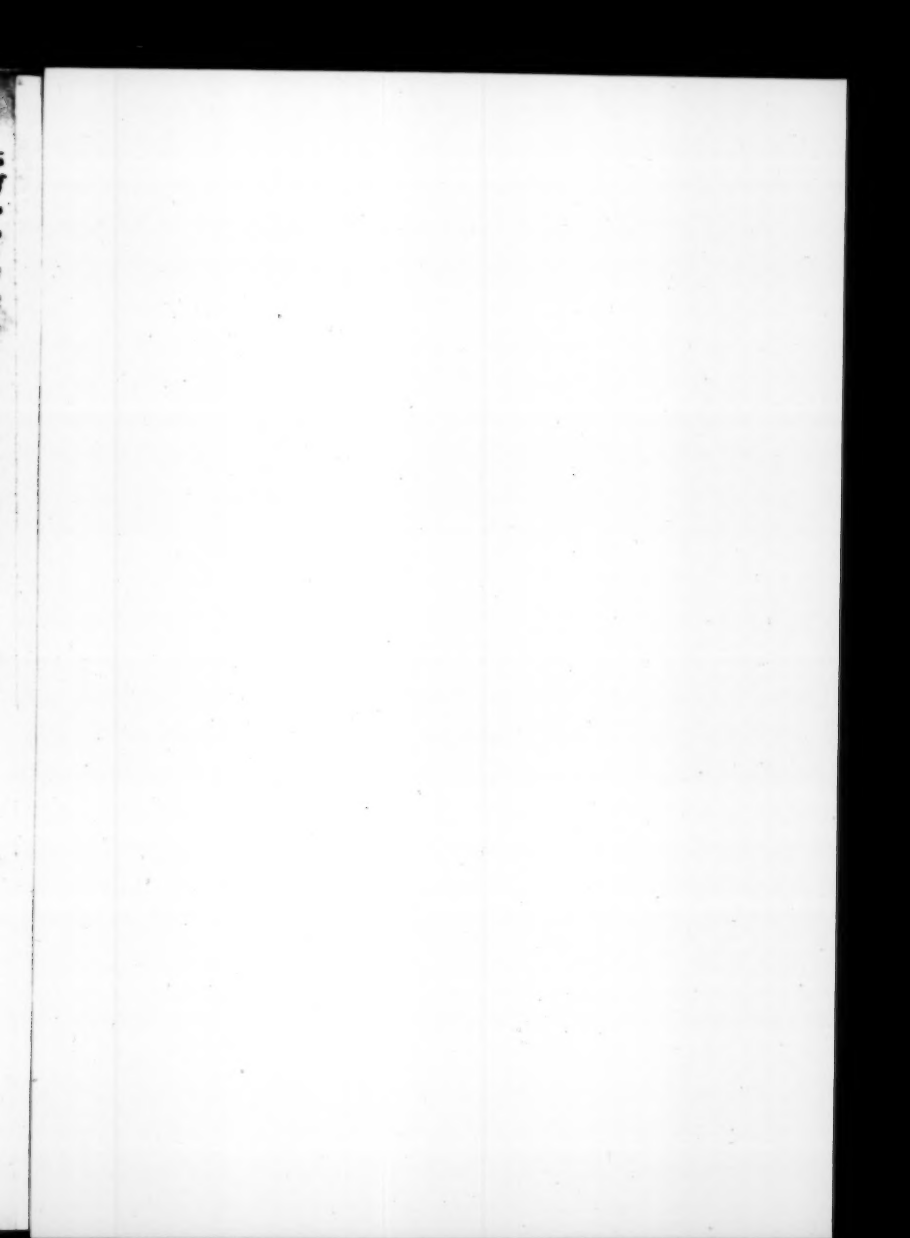
Page 1 Line 13 thus o, read, *this O*: page 2 line 16 injustice, read, *justice*.
 page 9 line 15 the last particular is made the penult. page 15 line 25 Job, read,
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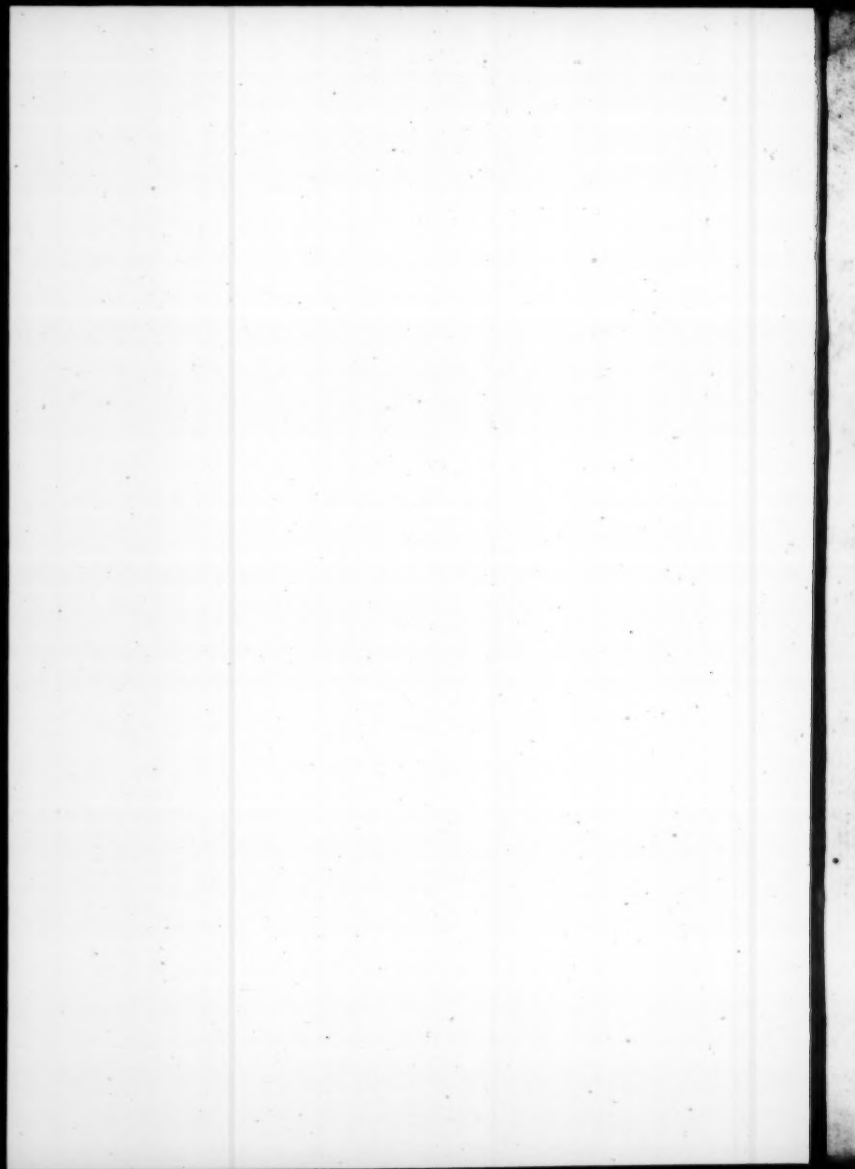
ERRATA.

37, as act, r, *as they act*. p. 61 r marg. l. 31, intention, r, *intention* p. 641 marg. l. 2, Petrum, r, *Petrus*: p. 643 l. 13, their heavenly, r, *the heavenly*: p. 660 l. 22, Christ, r, *of Christ*: p. 664 l. 2, against, r, *against the wicked*, ibid. l. 8, Deborah, add *Judg.* ibid. l. 27, wants not, r, *was not*: p. 671 l. 2, to the, r, *on the*: ibid. marg. l. 26, tendunt, r, *contendunt*: ibid. l. 40, hinc, r, *huic*: p. 674 l. 20, dele 1. p. 675 marg. l. 1, *at*, *at* p. 677 marg. l. 29, the Greek--- and the Hebrew---, r, *the Greek $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\delta\epsilon\iota\chi\epsilon\iota$, and the Hebrew $\פָּרַח$* p. 687 marg. l. 30, dele *loc.* p. 691 l. 22, digressed little to its use, r, *digressed a little to speak to its nature*: p. 696 l. 2, their, r, *the*: p. 697 l. 5, their, r, *the*: p. 702 l. ult his, r, *the*: p. 704 l. 16, Jam. 1. r, *Jam. 5.* p. 708 marg. l. 16, Aug. iust. r, *August.* p. 709 l. 26, prayers, r, *prayer*: p. 725 l. 4, deum to give, dele *to give*: p. 743 l. 10, which from, r, *which flow from*: p. 744 l. 13, P/a. 3. 62, r, *P/a. 32. 6.* ibid. l. 16, constituted, r, *continued*: p. 745 l. 16, judgment, r, *judgments*, ibid. l. 18, few, r, *few fast* p. 761 l. 24, hereafter, r, *will be their portion for ever*: p. 761 l. 19, watch, r, *wait*, ibid. marg. l. 11, concerning which, r, *concurring with*: p. 762 marg. l. 16, magna, r, *magica*: p. 764 l. 8, P/a. 27. r, *P/a. 21*: p. 784 l. 13, dele *them*: p. 789 marg. l. 31, Jefe at: p. 792 l. 22, homage, r, *huc age*: p. 793 l. 15, help, r, *keep*: p. 799 marg. l. 16, dele *et*: p. 800 l. 4, new a, r, *a new*: p. 806 l. 22, justice and, r, *justice*, *wait*: *thou submit, and present thy applications to the provoked Majesty*: p. 808 marg. l. 3, P/a. 11, r, *P/a. 11*: p. 812 l. 31, mercy, r, *mercies*: p. 823 marg. l. 13, God, r, *Gods*: p. 827 marg. l. 10, ipse, r, *ipse*: ibid. l. 34, aut ea, r, *autem*: p. 828 marg. l. 6, illo, r, *illa*.

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T H E







T H E P R E F A C E.



He Christians Charter is most comprehensive and broad: *Charta verè magna*; He is a great Heir though he hath little in hand. (a) *All are his*, 1. Cor. 3. vers. 21, 22. the world, the whole world is his; Yea, what is not yet known or discovered. Could *Alexander, Caesar*, or he who was the greatest Monarch and Potentate, lay claim to so much? Sea and Land, with all it's furniture, all it's beauty, glory, and riches is too mean a portion for him who is (b) born of God: The Heavens are his, and (may I not say) Hell also; though he shall never see that place of torment, yet it is his talent which he may improve to advantage. And yet all these great and excellent things are not all, nor the main, they are little, they are as nothing, they are not worthy once to be named in respect of those things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, 1. Cor. 2. vers. 9. in respect of that Crown of life and glory, 1. Pet. 5. vers. 4. *Jam. 1. vers. 12.* and that incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that fadeth not away, reserved for him in the Heavens, 1. Cor. 9. v. 25. 1. Pet. 1. v. 14. Thus, O ye despised and disconsolated Saints, this is your allowance and great portion; and these other things are but for our provision while we are in the wilderness, and a torch to let us see our way, and a staff in our hand while we are going home: Thus the children of God are great Heirs indeed; 2. Cor. 6.

(a) *All the creatures, yea and all the works and various dispensations of providence, are for our use and employment; they are our talents which we may improve for the honour of our Master and our own advantage. And thus we have not only jus ad omnia, but al- so (if our sloth and negligence did not hinder) jus in omnibus; and having nothing, we may thus possess all things,* 2. Cor. 6. ver. 10. *All*

are thus put under the Christians feet, and may be subservient to us, and become, as it were, a staff in our hand while we are walking with God, and toward the promised Land, omnia vestra sunt (saith Cajet. in 1. Cor. 3. ver. 21.) b.e. *Propter vos et ordinis ad vestram utilitatem.* (b) 1. Job. 3. 9.

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they are Kings, *Rev. 1. vers. 6.* All the Honours, Riches and Pleasures under the Sun, all corruptible Crowns wrapt up in one are but as a Cipher, and amount to nothing in respect of this one thing: They are verily happy and blessed who are thus happy; and yet the prime of all their happiness and *αὐτίκην* (c) 1. *John 3. vers. 9.* consisteth in this, that they have (c) *fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.*

The Lord himself is our great all; in Him alone we eminently enjoy all; *qui habet habentem omnia, habet omnia.* He who can with *David* (*Psalm. 16. vers. 5, 6.*) say, *The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and cup*, hath reason with him also to conclude, *I have a goodly heritage.* This was the marrow of *Abrahams* blessing when called to sojourn in a strange Land, that the Lord himself should be his portion and exceeding great reward, *Gen. 15. vers. 1.* Ah! would the men of this world have said, is this all our portion and allowance? Is this all the recompence we may expect? O! How would they have slighted such an offer? They could not extract any consolation from it; O! but saith the Lord to *Abraham*, What thinkest thou of thy condition? View thy portion and allowance; *I am thy Shield*, and wilt thou fear? *I am thy Reward*, and hast thou proven an ill Merchant? Dost thou rue thy bargain, now thou hast the full Ocean for leaving the empty Cisterns; I who am thy inheritance am the *Almighty God*; or as others (but to the same purpose) translate the words, *I am God all-sufficient*; there is in me, not only an infinite self-sufficiency, but also enough to satisfy the vast capacity of the reasonable creature which cannot be filled with any finite object; My sufficiency shall be for thy satisfaction, *I am thy Reward*; and although thou must be an expectant for a while, as to the full fruition of thy inheritance, yet thou shall have something in hand, I will not be as a stranger to thee in this thy Pilgrimage, I will visit thee, and all my Attributes shall be employed for thy good, my Mercy and loving Kindness shall follow thee, my Beauty and Excellency thou mayest behold, my Power shall uphold thee, and my Fury and Justice shall pursue thine enemies.

O! But may some with her (*John 4. vers. 11.*) say, the well

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well is deep, and we have nothing to draw with. *Ans.* It is true, of our selves we have neither a vessel to hold nor a hand to draw, but He who openeth the fountain and invites us to drink, doth offer both to us. He of His free love hath digged the well: the *Promises* which hold out to us these living waters, and *Faith*, which is the hand, are His free Gifts, and unless He pour out upon us the Spirit of *Prayer* and *Supplication*, (that being, as it were, the *bucket* wherewith we draw) we know not what to ask; so that albeit the Lord honour us in calling for our help and in imploying us in His work, yet all must come from Himself, and when He rewards our work He (*d*) crowns His own Gift.

But thus, though we have nothing to offer to Him but His own, (as *David* and that people truly said, concerning outward things and temporals, 1. *Chr.* 29. vers. 14. but we far rather and upon another account, as to our Spiritual sacrifices) yet He calls for our offering; though we have nothing wherewith to draw, yet He calls for our bucket that He may fill it; He will have us to pray, and He will perform our desires; He will give to His honest Supplicants, not some few things, but whatsoever they shall ask, *Joh.* 14. vers. 13. and *chap.* 16. vers. 23. He is God all-sufficient; all that can make for the creatures happiness is eminently to be found in Him, and efficiently from Him; and all this good, these great and excellent things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, must be conveyed unto us by Prayer, and given in return to our Supplications. That key wherewith (*e*) *Elias* did open and shut the doors of heaven, must unlock all our Fathers cabins, and the praying soul may choose what Jewel he will, he may lay hold on eternal life, and the immortall crown, the hidden (*f*) manna and the white stone, in which is engraven the new name which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.

2. There is a fulness in Christ, *Joh.* 1. vers. 16. in Him are treasures, all treasures of wisdom and knowledge; but ah! they are (*g*) hid, *Col.* 2. vers. 3. Though the treasure be full yet it is locked, and where shall we find a key to open it? Its hid, and how shall the ignorant foolish sinner fall upon it? Nay, but why complainest thou poor indigent and witless creature?

(d) *Deus coronat sua dona, non tuam merita. August. de gr. & lib. cap. 7. & hom. 14. in 50. hom. cum ab illo habeamus quicquid illi offerimus, & ex illo fit quicquid boni sumus, Serm. 1. in Psal. 32. (nobis 33.) vers. 4. inter pontificios, v. d. Durand. in 1. Sent. dist. 27. quest. 2. (e) *Fam. 5. vers. 17. 2. Chr. 6. v. 16. and chap. 7. vers. 13. (f) Rev. 2. vers. 17. (g) 2. Cor. 4. v. 18.**

(b) Rev. 3.
vers. 18. If 55.
vers. 1, 2.

(i) There is no
door so fast shut
that Prayer
will not get en-
trance, vid.
part 4. ch. 1.

(k) Gerbard
cont. harm.
cap. 179. uti-
litas orationis
tanta est, ut ne-
mo eam, &c.

(l) Song. 7.
vers. 6.

The owner (b) invites thee to come, he points out thy way and discovers the door, and thou hast the (i) keyes, as it were, hanging at thy belt; for if thou wilt knock, it shall be opened unto thee; if thou wilt seek thou shalt find; and if thou ask it shall be given thee, *Math. 7. vers. 7.* There is a well furnished table set before thee, and it is left to thy choice to cut and carve what thou wilt, and so if thou starve thou mayest know who should bear the blame.

O! (saith an (k) eminent and judicious Divine) who is able to enumerat all the excellencies and advantages of Prayer; What the heart is to the living creature; What rest to the weary; What joy to the sad; What gold to the indigent; What strength to the feeble; What nerves to the body; What spirits and blood to the life; Prayer is all that to the afflicted soul. It is as the Sun in the Firmament (or rather the Glass by which light is communicat) it's medicine to the sick, a refuge to the oppress'd, a sword against the devil, and a shield to ward off his fiery darts; It's eye-salve to the blind, it begetteth hope and confidence; it inflameth the heart with love, it worketh humility and filial fear, it elevats the mind above the creature, and sets the affections on things that are above; it brings a taste of the hidden manna, and sets the Supplicant before the Throne to behold the King in his glory, and leads him into the (l) Galleries where he may familiarly converse with his Lord and Sovereign. This is that golden chain which will hold the Almighty untill He blese thee; it is *Jacobs* ladder whereon thou mayest mount up to Heaven; It is that Jaw-bone wherewith *Sampson* smote the Philistines; This is *Noah* his dove, which alwayes returns with an Olive leaf of comfort to the disconsolate; This is *Dauids* stone wherewith he smote *Goliath*, and his Harp wherewith he drove away the evil spirit from *Saul*; This is that Pillar of fire and cloud which directs the Saints, and blind-folds their enemies; This was that Bow (the Promises being the Arrow and Faith the Hand) whereby these Worthies (*Heb. 11.*) of whom the world was not worthy, waxing valiant in fight, turned to flight the Armies of the Aliens, quenched the violence of the fire, escaped the edge of the
the

the Sword, subdued Kingdoms, stopped the mouths of Lyons, &c. O! Who is able to enumerat all the noble and admirable (m) effects of Prayer? What desolations it hath made in the earth; what revolutions in the world, and what astonishing deliverances it hath brought to the Saints. (m) Vide in
fra part. 4.
chap. ult.

O! That He who gave wisdom to (n) Bezaleel and Aholiab for making the Tabernacle according to the Pattern, would teach us the heavenly art of sacrificing to our God in spirit and in truth. The material Tabernacle and Temple, where are they now? Yet we must still bring our offering; the Christian oblation must never cease; we are Priests, Rev. 1. vers. 6. and we have an Altar, Heb. 13. vers. 10, 12, 15. But alas! may we with Isaac (Gen. 22. vers. 7.) say, where is the Lamb for a burnt offering? we have nothing to offer unless the Lord provide a Ram and instruct us how we should offer it up. Rom. 8. vers. 26. It is thought one of the most tolerable and easy tasks to pray; and every one (as they think) is able and fit enough for such an employment, and are busie enough in carrying on that trade, and they were not worthy to live (will such say) who do not call upon God: But ah! Who are they that are acquainted with the mystery of Prayer? Lip-labour is indeed an easy work; the Popish devotion, the whitening the out-side of the Sepulchre, is no difficult task, but it is not so easie to give life to the loathsom carcassee within; thou mayest draw nigh the Throne and prattle some few words before the Lord, and yet never put to one finger to the work, if thou do not put out thy strength to draw up thy dead lumpish heart; if thou find not a burthen pressing thee and it down, and call not to heaven for help and for fire to kindle and enlive thy sacrifice. Every key will not open the doors of Heaven; every knock will not obtain an entrance, nor every cry prevail: Let us then look up to Him who can only give us that wisdom which is from above; who can discover, bring to our hands, and help us to use that admirable piece of work, that it may not only prove a key to open the Lountrain, the Store-house door and all our fathers Cabins, but also for opening of our hearts, and an hammer to break the hard rocks of corruption and the stone there. Ah! But who is sufficient for

For such a task? A word spoken on such a subject can never be unseasonable; and though many have put in their Sickle here, yet much of the harvest is un-cut down: But more hath been said then rightly improven; though the Lord hath stirred up so many of His Messengers to point out the way to the Throne, and how to carry on a safe trade with Heaven; yet, who hath believed their report? And we shall not think our labour lost in bearing testimony against this sinning and prayerlesse Generation; nor shall we stand upon an Apology for making choice of such a Theme. Alas! How often have

(o) 1/. 37.

vers. 4, 5.

(p) That I
may so speak
with some emi-
nent Divines,
Mr. Good-
wine, Mr.
Curnall, &c.

(q) Gen. 27.

vers. 38.

(o) the children come to the birth and have stuck there for want of Prayers (p) Midwifry. The Promise many times is big with child, and is come to it's full reckoning, and hath no longer to go with the desired Mercy, then till thou run to the Throne of Grace and plead for it's deliverance; it only waits for the obstetrication of the prayer of Faith, that the Man-child may be brought forth. The Lord deals not sparingly with us, He hath many blessings to bestow: None of His children need with (q) Esau complain, that he hath not one to bestow on him: But alas! we are like a Kings Son in the cradle who knows not that he is Heir of a Crown, and thus neither regards nor improves his Dignity and Priviledge: Or like a Traveller, who having many Bills of Exchange, yet will not be at the pains to read them, but undervalues them as so much un-written paper, and will rather starve than bring them to the Exchanger, and plead for the sums to which they give him a right. Ah! Who would pity such a fool in his misery? And yet, who doth lay to heart that he is the man, and that this is his own case and condition; while we are in the (r) earthly house of this Tabernacle we are Pilgrims and Strangers, Heb. 11. vers. 13. We are far from home but our father is not unmindfull of us, He lets us not want Bonds and Bills of Exchange under the broad Seal of Heaven, and so cannot be lost; they are registred in the sacred Volume, and we may have an extract when we will. We have the credit and fidelity of the great King morgaged (as it were) for our security; and that He who gives (which is singular) will also answer these credential Letters; only they are as so many blank

(r) 2 Cor. 5.

vers. 1.

blank Bonds, and thou canst lay no claim to them till thy name be inserted. And our kind Father, from time to time, doth warn us, entreating that we would fill up the blank; that we would become willing and content to be happy and rich; that we would pray for an heart to prize the heavenly Treasure, and for an hand to write in our name in these evidences; to write it with a pen of Iron and the point of a Diamond, there to abide for ever: And then that we would ask a tongue wherewith we may plead at the mercy seat the performance of these promises, and that God would answer his owne bills.

And thus Prayer is that Manna on which the true Israelite can live and use it for all kind of food. The Rabbins imagine that whatsoever kind of meat the Jewes desired and longed for, their Manna while they did eat it, did perfectly relish the same. Certainly this our Manna will suite with, can answer and satisfie all sorts of appetits; nay it will serve not only for meat but also for medicine; in every case and condition, for every business and in all things Prayer is usefull, *Phil. 4. ver. 6.* It is that true money far more excellent and profitable then what the preacher speaketh of, *Eccles. 10. ver. 19.* That only answereth all things vendible, and can purchase the commodities for this bodily and perishing life; But this answereth and can bring in all things for body and soul, for this life and that which is to come: here a tool for every trade; an instrument for every work, an help for every purpose. What is said of the whole of holines in generall, *1. Tim. 4. ver. 8.* may fitly be applyed to Prayer in particular; it is profitable for all things, it is that faithful and happy messenger which alwaies returnes with an answer of peace.

But that we may stay no longer in the porch in handling this most weighty point (which may be called the marrow and sum of practicall divinity) we purpose in the Lords strength to follow this method. 1. We will enquire after the nature of Prayer and endeavour to shew what it is. 2. We will name the qualifications and requisits of an acceptable and prevailing Prayer: where we will more fully speake of that faith which is so necessary to the audience and acceptation, but little minded in the performance of this duty. 3. We will propone some
cases

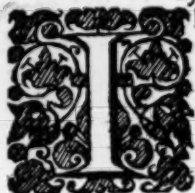
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cases and questions which may occur concerning the practice
of Prayer. 4 We will proceed to the returne of Prayer and en-
quire after the severall wayes God observes in answering our
Prayers, and of the certaintie of successe notwithstanding of the
many atheisticall cavills of Prayerlesse souls, closing all with
a word of exhortation, containing diverse motives to stirre us
up to the diligent and constant practice of this promising exer-
cise with an answer to objections.

PART



PART I.

Of the Nature of Prayer.



Opening the nature of Prayer, we will,
1. speak of the diverse notions and considerations under which Prayer may fall.
2. Of the Names given to it in the Word.
3. We will describe it. 4. We will enquire to what faculty of the soul it belongs, and in what act it consists. 5. We will speak to its subject and of the Persons on whom this duty doth ly. 6. Of its object, and to whom we should direct our Prayers. 7. Of the matter of Prayer, for whom, and for what it should be poured out; where we will take a view of the ground, warrand and foundation of Prayer, and inquire after the meaning and extent of the promises. 8. Of the author of Prayer, and the help of the spirit. 9. Of the altar whereon this sacrifice must be offered.

CHAP. I.

Prayer considered under diverse respects; as a Gift, as a Grace, as a Duty, and as a Mean.

Psal. 12. 5. For the sighing of the needy now will I arise (saith the Lord) Mic. 3. 4. Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them. Hos. 7. 14. And they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they bowed upon their beds.

There be too many cheaters in the world, who with their counterfeit money deceive the simple, yet there are moe who with such coyn would carry on a trade with heaven; and who dare offer to him, from whose eyes nothing is hid, such trash and refuse: but he cannot be mockt, he will not owne or accept what hath not the stamp of his spirit. Carnal desires, though vehement and fervent, must not be called Prayers; they deserve not the name of crying unto him, and though they flow

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from

Mal. 1. 8, 14.

Mal. 2. 2, 3.

from the heart, and carry alongst with them some kind of performance of duty, yet they shall not prevail: he who presents the sighs and broken words of his honest supplicants, and arises for their help, will not regard the tears and cries of these hypocrits: and its no small part of our task to find out a touch-stone whereby we may try the money wherewith we trafficke for eternity; and to discover the hale and the lame, that we may not dare to offer such corrupt things to the great King, whose name is dreadfull in all the earth, least he spread upon our faces the dung of our sacrifices.

And now in the entrance we would observe, that Prayer may fall under a fourfold notion and consideration. 1. As a Gift. 2. As a Grace. 3. As a Duty. 4. As a mean appointed of God for obtaining the good things he hath promised:

1. Wicked men as they may be eminent for parts and other gifts; so also, as to the gift of Prayer, they may tender up an excellent supplication, both for matter and expression, to the delight and edification of the hearers, and to the emolument and good of those who joyn with them, but with another heart: Gifts abused, though they profit not the receiver (but exceedingly aggravate his guiltiness) yet they may tend to the spiritual advantage of others; why might not these work-men who built an ark for *Noah* and his family, perish in the deluge?

But, 2. As many gracelesse souls may have the gift of Prayer, So many precious ones may want that gift as to any eminent measure and degree; they may poure out their souls before the Lord with much affection and tenderness, who being of small parts, have not this gift, for the edification, refreshing and stirring up the affections of others; yet I have known not a few, who as for naturall parts, have been reputed weak and simple, and who have had no great dexterity in worldly affairs, yet have been eminent, not only for grace, but also in the gift of Prayer, the Spirit (according to the Word *Rom. 8. 26.*) helping their infirmities, and enabling them to pray as they ought; not only by enlarging their hearts with holy desires: but also ordering these desires, and supplying fit and pertinent words for expressing of them, to the admiration

the hearers; yet it is too evident, that many of the saints want this Gift as to any considerable measure; who albeit upon this account they may be humbled, and with submission complain to God because of this infirmity, yet need not be too much discouraged, though the Lord hath not bestowed on them such a measure of knowledge and utterance as upon some others, yet he hath not withheld from them the Spirit of grace and supplication. What though thou canst but sigh with the needy (*Psal. 12. 5.*) and groan with the Prisoners? (*Psal. 102. 20.*) What though thou canst but chatter as a crane, and mourn as a dove? (*I/. 38. 14. 5.*) The Lord can read and understand that hand-writing, he knows the meaning of abrupt and broken words proceeding from a broken and contrite spirit, and will perform the desire of such disconsolate ones.

As for the two latter considerations, there is an usuall mistake on both hands, carnall hearts, who make little conscience of duty, look on Prayer as a mean; and the Saints, who dar not omit their duty, too often, forget the reward: these who ask amisse and cannot lay claim to the promise, yet will use Prayer as a charm and spel, they fear no evill because they say their Prayers every day, and the true Israelits who may draw nigh to God as a father in confidence to be heard, so trade with heaven as if a storm did alwayes follow them when they went to sea, and as if their vessell could not escape the Pirats: and thus though they will not be idle, but must hazard and send many Packs to sea, yet they expect not ever to hear of them again; and though the Lord pittie such, and will not deal with them according to their fears, yet often he hideth his face for a while, and maketh them meet with many contrair blasts, because of their diffidence; that though their Ship come safe to shoar at length, yet the voyage proveth uncomfortable and dangerous, and a considerable time may interveen before they hear of their return.

Thus we may speak of Prayer under all these four respects; But O! if the Lord would be pleased so to blesse these weak endeavours, that they may prove helpfull for preventing a divorce, where the Lord requires an union, that all of us may have such a measure of the spirit of *grace* poured out upon us, and

Of the Nature of Prayer

may, 2. be furnished with such gifts and abilities for ordering expressing our desires. And may, 3. be so enabled to make conscience of our duty; As that 4. We may go about the performance of it with cheerfulness and confidence, knowing that we shall not seek his face in vain; that thus grace may sanctifie our gifts, and successe may accompany our work; that albeit to our apprehension there must still be a distinction; yet there may be no more a separation, but that in all our supplications these may joyn hand in hand, and may be really united; so that we shall not need to prosecute the difference any further, only as occasion shall offer, we will adde a word, by way of remedy, for curing or preventing what may be found wanting or amisse in our Prayers as to any of these respects and considerations, looking up to Him, who only can (a) help our infirmities and teach us to Pray as we ought, and according to the will of God.

(a) Rom. 8.
26. 27.

CHAP. II.

*Prayer held forth under several Scripture expressions
Paralleled for preventing mistakes*

Math. 7. 7, 8. *Ask, and &c. for every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened,*

Jam. 1. 6. *Ask in faith, nothing wavering; And, 5. 16, The effectuall fervent Prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Eph. 6. 18, *Praying alwayes and watching thereunto with all perseverance, &c.*

DIvers names and expressions (if the difference be not merely literal and grammatical) must contribute not a little for clearing of the nature of the thing it self; it will not then be impertinent for us here to ponder a little the different wayes whereby the subject of our present enquiry is expressed in Scripture, especially since such a view in the porch (some brief observations for explication being intermixed) may help to prevent a double mistake, the one of carnall hearts, who because they find Prayer some times held forth under words that seem to import no great difficulty, seriousness and diligence, as to ask, seek, call, cry, knock, &c. are ready to apprehend

prehend that it is an easie task to pray; and that they need no further trouble themselves, if they can utter some few words in a formall way: and on the other hand, the Godly hearing of such importunity in Prayer, such fervency, watchfulnesse, perseverance, wrestling, weeping, &c. are in hazard to draw hard conclusions against themselves, as if they never had yet prayed acceptably.

Albeit now we may not speak at any length to these material cases, it being one of the main designs of the practicall part of this treatise to give some clearing to these; yet, for the present, we may set before both the presuming Atheist and the tender Christian, what, through the blessing of God, may prove a remedy to both, if they will be at the pains to compare these Scriptures together; and thus seek after the sense. Carnall men may see that there is difficulty in the work, and that lip-labour is no Prayer; and the Godly, who offer up the desire of their heart to God, need not be discouraged, though at all times they have not such enlarged affections, zeal and continuance, as some of Gods children upon speciall occasions have had. And as this parallel, may now be helpfull to that purpose; So it may give some light, when we come to speak of these cases more fully in the qualifications of Prayer, and to what we are to say concerning the nature of it here, *Chap. 4.*

1. We will begin with such expressions as seem to import no great difficulty. And thus to pray, 1. Is but to ask, *Mat. 7. 7.* O! but stay a little fond atheist, and remember, not every one who saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of heaven, except he be a doer of the will of God, *v. 21.* Thou must then be a doer as well as an asker, and thou must ask in faith, nothing wavering, and with an honest and single mind, *Ja. 1. 6, 8.* And thy end must be pure and holy, for many ask, and receive not, because they ask amisse, *Ja. 4. 3.*

2. To pray is but to seek, *Mat. 7. 7.* O! but if thou wouldst find, thou must seek with all thy heart and with all thy soul, *Deut. 4. 29.* Thou must seek God diligently, *Heb. 11. 6.* Thou must first seek the Glory of God and prefer holiness to the world, *Mat. 6. 33.* otherwise, though thou wouldst seek God daylie, thou wouldst not meet with successe, *Is. 58.*

Prayer held forth under several Scriptura expressions.

2. 3. If thou choose not the feare of the Lord, though thou seekest him early, thou shalt not find him, *Prov.* 1. 28, 29. And therefore we are commanded to adde wrestling and striving to our seeking, that we may prevail, *Rom.* 15. 30.

3. If we will but knock or cry, it will be opened to us, *Mat.* 7. 8. O? but it is the cry of such as fear him that he will hear, *Pf.* 145, 19. If we hearken not to God while he calleth and cryeth to us in his word; we may cry, howl and complain as much as we will, and he laugh at our calamity, and mock when our fear cometh, *Prov.* 1. 24, 26, 28. *Hos.* 7. 14. Its true our Prayers and praises, are the fruit of the lips, *Heb.* 13. 15. Our tongue must be employed in honouring our God, and the lips that are thus employed, must not be feigned, *Pf.* 17. 1. They must follow the heart and expresse what it enditeth, *Pf.* 45. 1. Thy words must be the fruit of meditation, *Pf.* 5. 1. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off their remembrance from the earth, *Pf.* 34. 16, 17. And then if thou wouldst have the door opened unto thee while thou knockest, thou must open to Christ while he stands at thy door and knocks, *Rev.* 3. 20. Otherwise, though thou wert his spouse he will withdraw for a while and shut the door upon thee, *Cant.* 5. 2, 6.

4. To Pray, is but to desire: for, the Lord will satisfie the desire of every living thing. *Pf.* 145, 16. O! but whatever the Lord, out of his general bounty doth for satisfying the natural desires of bruits and brutish men, yet as a father, he will not bestow covenanted mercies upon any who are not his children, he will thus only satisfie the desire of them that fear him, *v.* 19. and of such as walk humbly before him, *Pf.* 10, 17.

5. We need do no more but look unto God, and he will save and deliver us, *If.* 45. 22. O! but thou must look unto him with the eye of faith and with a mourning eye; thou must in bitterness look upon him whom thou hast pierced, *Zech.* 12. 10. He that looks to God for good things, must shut his eyes from seeing evil, *If.* 33. 15, 16, 17. Otherwise thou mayest till thine eyes grow dimme, look for peace, but no good will come; and for a time of health, and behold trouble, *Jer.* 8. 15, 14.

6. If

Prayer held forth under several Scripture expressions.

6. If wee draw nigh to him, he will draw near to us with mercies, *Pf. 4. 8.* O! but we must draw near to him with the heart and not with the mouth only: the Lord is nigh only to such as are of a broken heart, and will only save such as be of a contrite spirit, *Pf. 34. 18.* But wo to them that draw nigh to God, with their mouth and honour him with their lips, and remove their heart far from him; he will draw nigh to such but in wrath, and judgement. *If. 29. 13. 14.* If such open their mouth, he will lift up his Hand against them. O! but if thou hearken to what proceeds from the mouth of God, and walk not in the lust of thine own heart, then open thy mouth as wide as thou wilt, and God will fill it, *Pf. 81. 10. 11.*

7. If we will but lift up our hands unto him, we will be satisfied, *Pf. 63. 4. 5.* O! but first we must lift up our soul, *Pf. 25. 1.* and then lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting, *1. Tim. 2. 8.* We must wash and make our selves clean, otherwise the Lord will hide his eyes when we spread forth our hands, *If. 1. 15. 16. &c.*

As to the second sort of expressions, the Scripture sheweth how the Saints should be enlarged in Prayer, and that often they have (a) mounted up with wings as Eagles when they look towards the Throne, and that they have run without fainting and weariness, that they should cry (b) mightily unto the Lord, *Job. 34. 8.* and pour out their heart like water before his face, *Lam. 2. 19.* and pray night and day exceedingly, *1. Thess. 2. 10.* and make their bed to swim, and water their couch with their tears, *Pf. 6. 6.* and alwayes labour fervently in prayers, *Col. 4. 12.* and (c) strive and wrestle as in an agony, *Rom. 15. 30.* and pray alwayes, watching thereunto with all perserverance, *Eph. 6. 18.* and never faint in praying, *Luk 18. 1.* and seek God diligently, and with the whole heart and soul, *Heb. 11. 6. Deut. 4. 29.* never hold their peace day nor night and keep no silence, *If. 62. 6. Pf. 22. 2.* and ask in faith, nothing wavering, *Jam. 1. 6.* and still wrestle with tears and supplications untill they prevail, *Gen. 32. 24. 26. Hos. 12. 4. &c.*

Thus the Saints should be, and have been enlarged upon special occasions, trials and temptations, while the Lord hath poured

(a) *If. 40. 31.*
(b) *The pagan King could preach this point of Divinity.*

(c) *судавит, a Metaphor from the Grecian Games and Combats in which as the Poet saith Multa talis fecitque puer, sudavit & al- fir, vid. Scap- lex. § 1 a γυν & D. Ham- mond on 1. Thess. 2. 8.*

poured out upon them the spirit of supplication, and hath filled their sails with a more then ordinary gale : and if thou hast not met with such trials, praise him who hath condescended to thy weakness ; but make not what should be a mark and scope at which thou shouldst aim, a mark and rule whereby to judge of thy state and condition, or of Gods accepting of thy performances and oblations.

CHAP. III.

Prayer described.

1. Pet. 2. 5. Ye are an holy Priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

WHat Bias the Philosopher, from an heroick moral Principle could say, when his Countrey *Priena*, was spoiled, that enemies could not spoil him, his baggage was light and could easily be transported ; for, said he, I alwayes (a) carry all mine about with me : this may every true Israelite more truly say and upon better grounds. There be two lessons, 1. That of self denial, *Mat.* 16. 24. 2. Of true contentment, *Phil.* 4. 11, 12. which cannot be learned in all the pagan Academies in the world. It is the honest Christians incommunicable propriety to know (with him, *Phil.* 4. 12.) how to want and how to abound : but though he can well bear the want of so many things ; yet he cannot, while in the field surrounded with enemies, while in this wilderness and exposed to the violence of so many robbers, want his armour, and having his quiver so full of (b) arrows, he cannot want his bow : give me children else I die, said she in her impatience, *Gen.* 30. 1. O ! But may the Christian well say, let me pray or I cannot live. What can the poor Pilgrime do, if he have no provision ? Prayer is our money that answereth all things ; what though we be far from home ? yet the treasure followeth us, it's within a cry, and Prayer can bring from thence what we can stand in need ; ask whatsoever ye will, it shall be given unto you, *Joh.* 16. 23. &c. Ah ! How should a Christian live without his God and without his Saviour ? and how shall he live without his life ? that's impossible. O ! but our life is hid with

(a) *Omnia mea, mecum porto.*

Quae mea sunt, virtus dat, & ars: hac omnia mecum Porto. Reus ad symb. Fl. Pl. Valent. Imp.

(b) *The Promises are these arrows which the bow of Prayer discharges.*

with Christ in God, *Col. 3. 3.* And can there then be a distance and separation of him from God? Nay, pray he must, he must look up to God and lift up his soul to the Throne. And thus some of the (c) ancient Doctors have defined Prayer, *a lifting up of the soul to God: Unto thee, O Lord,* (saith the Psalmist, while he is presenting his supplication to God, *Psal. 25. 1.*) *do I lift up my soul.* O! but the distance is great, and where shall this holy man find a ladder to reach the Heavens? O! but he was well acquainted with such a voyage; and how quickly, as with wings, doth he mount up and approach the Throne? and close with the King, wrestle with him, and at length prevail; *v. 2. &c. v. 15. &c.*

And as Prayer is thus so necessary and usefull for us, so it is well pleasing and acceptable to God; it is his delight, *Prov. 15. 8.* Yea, sometimes it is put for the whole worship of God, (one particular, because of it's excellency in place of the general) as *Gen. 4. 26. Is. 64. 7. Mat. 21. 13.* O! How should we then blush at the impudence of the Roman Clergy; who with their Patron, (d) *Thomas Aquinas*, will question and dispute for and against in these points that are so certain and undenyable? As, 1. If it be convenient to pray. 2. If Prayer be a Religious act, and begin their disputes with a *videtur quod non*, as if their trifling objections could render the negative any wayes probable, or to have the least appearance of truth: Yet, herein they carry themselves sutablely to their own principles. For upon good ground it may be inquired, if the Popish Devotion be convenient? and if their lip-labour and moving of the tongue, without attention and affection, (as we shall (e) hear themselves confess) yea, and without understanding (while they pray in an unknown language) be a Religious act, and deserve the name of divine Worship? and we may confidently affirm, that to dally thus in Gods service, and to teach others to do so, is a notable injury against the infinite Majesty of God, an impious and blasphemous mockerie of the Omni-scient and holy One, who must be worshiped in spirit and truth, *Joh. 4. 23.* and with the whole heart, as too little to offer unto Him (if we had more to give) and too naughty to be employed in His worship: Nay, this doth not only savour

(c) *Veteres cum Damasceno de Fide. orth. lib. 3. cap. 24. definiunt precationem, ἀναβασιν τῆς ψυχῆς τῷ θεῷ.*

(d) *Thom. 2. 2. quæst. 83. art. 2. & 1. Less. & Swar. loc. citand. & alii Scholastici ad locum.*

(e) *See part 2. chap.*

Prayer described.

of the pagan and heathenish delusion, that much babling is acceptable to God, *Mat. 6. 7.* but also of the Satanicall superstition of Witches and Charmers, who are well acquainted with such sort of prayers, as fit engines for accomplishing their hellish designs; that kind of prayer, being, as it were, the Devils *A. B. C.* which he first teacheth his schollars, which he will indeed answer, because they are abominable to God; and that thus he may delude and allure these miserable wretches and keep them in his snare: What kind of teachers then must these be, that dare affirm that God will hear and accept such Prayers? These must be the seducing spirits (of whom the Apostle warneth us, whose lot hath fallen in the latter times, to beware, *1. Tim. 4. 1.*) who teach the doctrine of Devils, having their conscience seared with a hot iron.

O! but you will then say, what is the Prayer that God will hear and accept? For answer, we might bring many emphatick sentences and expressions of the ancient Doctours of the Church, (who in their meditations have rather been taken up with its excellency, sweetness and usefulness, then its nature and theorie) which though they may suffice for stopping the foul mouths of Popish Casuists and Schoolmen, yet they are rather Rethorickall commendations then descriptions of this great duty; but of late, since learnig became more polished, every one (almost) who hath spoken to this point, hath given, as it were, a new definition; and it were no difficult task in us to do the like. But since all the diversitie is rather in words and phrases then in the matter, we could wish that all would rest on that which doth most fully and clearly explain the thing; and thus (as we conceive) in our Catechisme, Prayer is excellently well (f) described *an offering up of our desires to God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ by the help of his spirit, with confession of our sins, and thankfull acknowledgment of his mercies.* Here, 1. we have the act it self specified. 2. The subject. 3. The matter and object whereabout it is employed. 4. The rule. 5. The object to which it is directed. 6. The incense that perfumes our duty, and makes it acceptable. And. 7. our help and assistance in this great work; or thus, In this our christian sacrifice we have, 1. the oblation it self

(f) *Praying together what is said both in the larger and shorter Catechisme*

Prayer Described.

self. 2. The priest that offereth it. 3. The thing we sacrifice and offer up. 4. The person to whom we present this oblation. 5. The manner how, & the rule whereby we are directed to make choyce of what we should offer. 6. The altar. And. 7. our guid, leader and assistant. Of these severally, as the Lord shall enable, purposing to add a word concerning the end and scope we should aime at in this performance, in the qualifications, part 2. Chap, 1.

As to that which followeth in the last words of this description concerning, 1. *Confession of sin.* 2. *The return of praise for mercies*: Its certaine these must be joyned and intermixed with our petitions. We must confess and then beg pardon, and thankfully remember mercies already received, that they may be blessed to us in the use, and that by our ingratitude we obstruct not the bestowing of future and desired mercies. And thus they belong to the compleating and (as (g) *Swarez* speaketh) integration of Prayer, and so ought not have been omitted in its definition: yet, since they make us two distinct heads of practicall divinitie, and here fall in only as accessories of this duty, we will refer them to their proper place, purposing now only to speak of Prayer, according to its proper acception; And thus it is contra-distinguished from confession, thanksgiving, meditation, &c. and doth import (h) asking or petition. And thus sayeth (i) (*Swarez*) when mention is made of Prayer for any person or thing in the Scriptures, it is alwayes taken in this sense, and the fathers and School-men, and whosoever (saith he) have written of Prayer, have spoken of it in this signification; and the word *Prayer*, in our language, cannot, without great impropriety, be applyed to signifie any other thing.

(g) *Per supplicationem intelligit in Apostolus, 1. Tim. 2. i. orationem propriissimam pro petitione, quia vero omnes, (i. e. quatuor genera orationum ibi enumerata) debent conjugari petitioni ut perfecta & efficax sit, ideo etiam censetur quasi quatuor partes complementes & constituentes integrum officium orandi, Frasn. Swarez ad 2. 2. a quæst. 81. ad 100. de Stat. Ryl. Tem. 2. Tract. 4. lib. 2. cap. 3. sect. 4. 8. Licet oratio plurium virtutum actus includatur, omnes tamen ad petitionem ordinantur, ut melius fiat, & inde orationis nomen participant, ibid. in primo cap. lib. 2. vid. lib. 1. cap. 1. sect. 8, 9. (h) Et in hoc sensu definiente Damasceno, loc. cit. est petitio decentium à Deo. (i) Swarez, loc. cit. sect. 8. Ipsa ergo petitio propriissimo & speciali modo oratio dicitur, atque ita censent. D. Thom. Bon. & omnes qui de oratione scribunt.*

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CHAP. IV.

In what act of the Soul prayer doth principally consist.

Psal. 27. 8. When thou saidest, seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

(a) *Quod locum generis occupat.*

CConcerning that which we meet with in the (a) first words of the definition, while Prayer is said to be an offering up of our desires, &c. we may inquire, In what act of the Soul doth Prayer directly, formally and principally consist? By which question, we do not exclude the voice, as if it might not concur in the performance of this duty: Wherefore is the tongue called our glory? *Pf. 57. 8. and 108. 1. and 30. 12.* if it should not be employed in glorifying its Maker, in praising of, and praying unto Him; but though it must joyn in the work, yet, it cannot give life and being unto it; that must flow from another fountain, after which we now enquire: and there-

(b) *1. Cor. 12. 8.*

(c) *Pf. 139.*

(d) *Estque haec significatio*

communis mentali & vocali

orationi, quia utroque modo

petitio fieri potest à Deo,

Swar. loc. cit. lib. 1. cap. 1.

(c) 8.

(e) *Thom. 22. quaest. 82. art. 1.*

(f) *Loc. cit. in Corp.*

(g) *Ita se habet oratio ad superiorem, sicut imperium ad inferiorem.*

fore while Prayer is divided in Mental and Vocal, the last must include and suppose the former, else it deserves not the name. Lip labour is not Prayer. But you will say, we cannot petition and ask but by the voice, and therefore the first must also include the last. *Ans.* Amongst men there can be no society, no asking nor granting, unless there be some expression by the voice or outward gestures; but we may converse with the father of Spirits and pray to Him, (who (b) understandeth all the imaginations of our thoughts, and espieth them (c) afar off, before they have any being or can be known to our selves) without an interpreter. This (d) *Swar.* granteth, and I think none of the Papists (these Patrons of Lip-devotion) will deny.

In answer to the Queree, the Roman Casuists and Scholemen following their Patron, (e) *Thomas*, affirm, that Prayer is an act of the Understanding and not of the Will. Their grounds are frivolous, and not worthy to be considered, unless to shew the folly of these luxuriant wits. 1. It belongs (saith (f) *Thomas*) to the understanding, as to command; so also to (g) petition and ask. *Ans.* Whatever might be said concerning the faculty of the Soul, that commands and sets a work the

the rest; yet, we cannot be said to ask any thing of God unless the Heart present it's desire, and so the Will must draw up the supplication and offer it to the King. But we may far more probably lay down the contradictory supposition, and say, that it belongeth not to the understanding (as elsewhere we may have occasion to shew at greater length) but to the will, as the Mistis and Superiour, to command the rest of the faculties. O! But, 2. (saith (b) *Lessius*) Prayer is Locution and a kind of Speech: Thus the Fathers have defined Prayer, *a conference with God*, but nothing within us, except the understanding can entertain that conference. *Ans.* Its true in Prayer we enjoy a sweet communion with God, we speak to him and poure out our complaints unto him; but its a spirituall conference, in which the heart, the will and the affections are principally employed. That's the first thing which God requires and especially regards, *My son, give me thy heart*, *Prov.* 23. 26. And therefore whenever the Psalmist drew nigh to God, either to pray or praise, he lookt mainly to his heart, knowing, that if it was not prepared to speak to God, there was no other speaker that would get a hearing; and he thinks it not enough to have his heart set a work, unless the whole heart were employed, *Pf.* 9. 1. *Pf.* 111. 1. *Pf.* 119. 145. *Pf.* 138. 1. *Pf.* 86. 12, &c, and only that man to him, is the blessed man, that seeks God (whether in Prayer or any other point of Worship) with the whole heart, *Pf.* 119. 2. The heart hath a voice which God well understandeth, and will hear when all other Messengers are sent away empty: we have a sweet, though short, dialogue, *Pf.* 27. 8. The Lord begins and drawes on the discourse with a kindly invitation to seek his face, but who makes answer? O! Say these learned Rabbies, the heart and will cannot speak; nay, but saith the Prophet *David*, I acknowledge no such axiom, my heart must make the reply, *my (i) heart said unto thee, thy face, Lord, will I seek.*

Amongst our Divines I find not this question moved; but I know (k) none of them who will not joyn with D. (l) *Ames*, while he describeth Prayer *a religious presenting of our wills before God*; which, upon the matter, differs not from

(h) *Lessius de Just. & Jur. lib. 2. cap. 37. dub. 2. Greg. Nyss Or. 1. de Or. Dom. Chrysost. lib. de Orand. Deum, dicitur orationem esse colloquium cum Deo.*

(i) לב
(k) *Only Dan. Till once ours, then Arminian; and afterwards I know not what, in his Syntag. disp. de prec. seculis 10 joyn with the School-men.*
(l) *Oratio est voluntatis nostrae religiosa representatio coram Deo.*
Amel. Med. Theol. cap. 9. & de cas. consil. lib. 4. cap. 14.

what

In what act of the Soul Prayer doth principally consist.

what we propounded from our Catechism, where Prayer is said to be *an offering up of our desires to God*: For, though there may be carnal and selfish desires in the inferiour and sensitive appetite, (which is common to us with the bruits) yet, spiritual desires (which are the only fit materials of an acceptable Prayer) are proper to the will and rational faculty: It is true, we may pray for our daily bread, but our motives and ends (which specify and denominate our desires) must be heavenly and spiritual; and we must ask from God, which is beyond the sphere of the material appetite, which cannot look up so high, it being limited to sensitive objects upon sensible principles and motives: And therefore, it must be proper to the will to (m) spiritualize our sacrifices, that they may become acceptable to God.

(m) 1. Pet.
3. 5.

To the Question propounded, Then we *Ans.* That albeit in Prayer we should employ and stir up all that is within us, to look towards God, and to contribute it's assistance and help, as that holy Man, who was well acquainted with this exercise, while he goes to praise and bless God, calls to his soul and all that is within him, to joyn in the work, *Ps.* 103. 1. 1. The mind and understanding should bring in provision and matter for enflaming the heart with holy Desires. 2. Our memories should present these Items and Bills of receipt from, and Debts owing to God; it should offer to the meditation a perfect list and catalogue of Sins and Mercies. 3. The sensitive appetite should give in a Bond of Peace, that it shall not disturb and raise tumults, nor frame and give in a treacherous (n) Libel and Remonstrance against such holy motions, as the heart doth travel with, and is in the way to endite and breathe out before the Lord. 4. The outward senses should covenant, not to offer to the affections such baits and allurements, nor to cast in their way such golden apples, as may interrupt and impede them in their motion towards the Throne, and may call them back from heaven to earth. 5. The will it self, the main agent and leader, must be set a work by spiritual aimes and intentions; if the end and scope be base and naught, the motion is lost, though never so swift and vigorous; and both will and understanding should be most serious in their attention, 1. To the

(n) Old Adam,
a vile Protest-
er; the sen-
sitive appetite,
his factor and
agent, and the
will byassed to
his party and
faction.

the matter of their petitions. 2. To the object to which they are to present them, (as having to do with Him, who is the searcher of hearts.) 3. To the frame of the Soul, the spring and rise of it's actings, their fervency, vigour and zeal, &c. But though thus we should call to all that is within us, to help us a lift, while we are to rouse and draw up our dead lumpish and rocky hearts with us to the Mount, yet only the will draws nigh to the King, and presents it's Bills of complaint, our supplications and requests. The heart is that vessel of honour, 2. *Tim.* 2. 21. fitted (if sanctified and seasoned with grace) and prepared for the Masters use. It is the best room of the soul, reserved to welcom and entertain it's King and Lord ; and while He maketh His abode there, His host becomes a great minion : Now he hath the Kings ear, and may ask what he will, it shall be given him. And thus, whatever attendants be employed to wait upon and serve the King, yet the Host is master of the feast ; and whatever befalls the rest, his Bills must be satisfied, his Suit dispatched, and his Requests granted.

And thus Prayer doth formally and primarily consist in an act of the will ; and it is *an offering up of our desires to God* ; it is not the simple act of desiring : For, then to *desire* and to *pray* were all one ; and carnal voluptuous, ambitious and avaritious men, who have said to the Lord, (with these miscreants, *Job* 21. 14.) depart from us ; for we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes, and what profit should we have if we pray unto him ? even those men who are so great strangers and enemies to Prayer, are big with desires, having as many desires as lusts. Every desire then is not a Prayer, but a desire so and so qualified ; a desire directed and offered up to God.

But we must not imagine, that our heart stands in need of a messenger, to carry and present its desires before the Throne ; it hath a tongue to speak for it self, *Pf.* 27. 8. And God understands and hearkens to its voice, and will give a return, *Pf.* 145. 19. *Pf.* 10. 17. Nay but (saith *(o)* Aquinas) our desires need an interpreter who must order and present them to God, and that must be the mind and understanding ; and thus Prayer, directly importing this ordering and offering up of our desires, must be an act of the intellective faculty. *Ans.* With *(p)* Sco-

(o) Thom. 2.
2. quæst. 83.
art. 2. ad 1. peti-
tio (quæ ad ra-
tionem perti-
net) est quo-
dammodo desi-
derii interpret.
Pet. a S. Jo-
seph, 1d. Theo.
Mor. lib. 4.
cap. 2. depre-
cacio ordina-
tionem quan-
dam denotat:
ordinatio au-
tem & (ut lo-
quitur Tho.)
dispositio ad
rationem per-
tinet.

(p) Scot. in 2.
dist. 6. quæst.
1. & dist. 38.
quæst. 1. sic lo-
quitur, utendo
autem, sive
ordinando ser-
re unum ama-
bile ad aliud
est voluntatis
sicut enim vo-
luntas est re-
flexiva, quia
immaterialis,
ita & colla-
tiva,

that it doth no lesse agree to the will, to order and dispose the means for the end, then to the mind to deliberate about the means; yea (q) *Thomas* himself, speaking of the locution of Angels, grants that it belongs to the will to present, order (r) and refer; yea and to expresse, and manifest the thoughts of the heart, for he (s) will have the speech of angels, to consist in this directing, and willing their thoughts to be known to others; and yet here he will have the will to be blind, and full of confusion as if it were sharp sighted, when it looked abroad, but otherwise did see nothing at home and within doors. But that wee may not insist on such speculations, I would ask, to what purpose shall the heart call for such an Interpreter? For, 1. is not the heart well enough (t) acquaint with its own desires? if it be a stranger to its owne actings, who will make their acquaintance? Or, 2. Doth the Lord stand in need of a trenchman? shall he who searcheth the heart and trieth the reins; he who knoweth what is in man, and needeth not that any should testifie of man, (Jer. 17. 10.) go to another, and ask, what are the purposes and desires of the heart?

Though then we deny not the concurrence of the understanding, but wish, that all that is within us may joyn, and were employed in this spiritual and solemn exercise; yet, all the faculties of the soul, are as so many attendants to wait upon the heart, till it draw nigh, direct it's desires, and present it's supplications to the great King.

But, let none mistake, as if we thought, that the will, by a new act, did reflect upon it's desires, and thereby did order and offer them to God. 1. Such a reflexion, will be found contrary to experience; if any will descend into his own heart; and look back upon his own actings, he will not find it there, or that he stood in need of any such new act. And, 2. it will be hard to shew what such a reflex act did import, and to what kind of volition it should be referred. The will then, by one and the same act, and in the same instant of time desireth, and desireth from God: as one and the same act is, 1. the desire of the soul; and, 2. the desire of such an object; So, 3. from such an hand and fountain; Yea, some, with (u) *Scaliger*, (for which he is unjustly reprehended by (x) *Raynandus*) do think

(q) Thom. 1. quæst. 107. art. 1. in corp. per voluntatem conceptus mens ordinatur ad alterum, puta vel ad agendum, vel ad manifestandum alteri, &c. vid. loc.

(r) Ibid. ad 1.

(s) Sic Cajet. al loc. cit. & alii non pauci, Thomistæ præceptorem suum interpretantur.

(t) Nolumus jam examini subicire figmentum Philosophorum, qui statunt voluntatem esse cæcam, & non nisi oculis (visum teneatis amici) alienis videre.

(u) Scal. exercit. 317. desiderium, quasi desideribus, quod res desiderata expectatur de cælo.

(x) Theop. Raynand. mor. discip. dist. 3. quæst. 2. art. 3. § 183.

think this last respect to have occasioned the word ; so that, according to the Etymon of it, *a desire*, is that which is expected from the starres (which Pagans did think to be and worshiped as Gods : from which conceit, as some think, did also arise the greek word *δεο*) Thus one and the same act of the will, is extended (of necessitie ; for, it must have some matter about which it must converse) 1. To its object. 2. Directed to God. And, 3. referred to such and such an end. And only to our apprehension, and for distinctions sake, these severall respects and formalities, are differenced as to Prayer, where they should be really united in one and the same act ; but yet, there is ground for such a distinction and precision, since every desire is not directed towards God, nor doth aime at a right end. And thus, for explications sake, we may affirm, that in Prayer there is a kind of (y) *Extension* and enlarging of desires 1. to the right fountain, for a supply ; and, 2. to the right end and marke. And, 3. to the right rule, for bounding and limiting of it, both as to matter and manner ; so that Prayer formally, and as such, doth import not the desire it self, (which is, as it were, the *materials*; and in it self considered, is indifferent and determinable otherwise) but this *Offering* and *directing of our desires to God* ; for thereby desires acted and powred out by way of Prayer, are distinguished from all other desires, which want this qualification, and deserve not the name of Prayer. But alwayes it would be remembred, that this Christian sacrifice, is not like the material and Leviticall oblations : for, every one, (as being a preist to God, *Rev. 1. 6.*) may offer up his own sacrifice. Christ indeed must be our Altar and high Priest, and the holy Spirit, must bring fire and incense ; but the heart it self, must offer up its own desires ; it needs not run to another Priest, nor employ the mind and understanding to take its offering, and present it to God.

(y) *no immaterial thing (such as the will and its affections) is capable of any proper and quantitative dimension and extension.*

These things being premised for explication, let us now collect from Scripture, some few reasons, not so much to stop the mouths of subtile disputers, as to convince negligent worshippers of their sin, and to minde them of that which is the life and main ingredient of this solemn performance.

Argument 1.

Reas. 1. That which God doth especially require, and look for in these that draw nigh unto Him, that must be the chief and principal part of Prayer; (whereby, in a special manner, we approach to Him) But it's the heart that God mainly requires and looks after in all those, *Jer.* 12. 2. *Pf.* 34. 18. *Prov.* 23. 26.

5. 2. That must be the chief part of our worship: for the want whereof, the Lord is most provoked, and specially complaineth: But God is most provoked, when our heart doth not joyn in the duty, when we draw nigh to Him with our mouth, and honour Him with our lips, and keep our heart far from Him, *Jf.* 29. 13. *Matth.* 15. 8.

3. That, without which our prayers are no prayers, they deserve not the name, that must be the prime of the duty; But without the heart, there may be a voice, much crying and howling, and yet no Prayer in Gods account, *Hos.* 7. 14. If our heart be not right, God will not value our requests, *Pf.* 66. 18.

4. That which answereth Gods call and invitation, and promiseth to seek His face, that must be the main agent and pleader at the Throne; But the heart, as the Master of the house, undertakes in name of the rest, offers to welcome Him, invites Him to come in, and tells Him, that it will look up to Him, and seek His face, (and how? I would ask, if not by Prayer and Praises) *Pf.* 27. 8.

5. That which God heareth and answereth, that must be Prayer: But it is the voice and cry of the heart; its panting, longing and desiring, that He heareth and will satisfy, *Pf.* 10. 17. and, 145. 19.

6. That which mainly knits and unites us to God, must be the main and principal thing in Prayer, whereby, in a special and solemn manner, we ascend unto God, close (&) with Him, and will not let him go till He bless us; But it is the heart and affections that especially do unite and knit us to God: He regardeth not other bonds, if these be wanting: the distance still continueth, so long as the heart is removed from Him, *Mark* 7. 6. *Matth.* 15. 8.

7. There may be much light in the understanding, a great measure

measure of knowledge of the promises, and a great dexteritie to plead them with much eloquence; and yet, nothing of the life of Prayer; nothing but the carcass, or rather the picture and shadow of Prayer, which God will not regard, more then the cry of these foolish virgins, who very pathetically, and in much anguish of spirit, said, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, not having had their hearts prepared to meet him, while he came unto them, *Mat. 25. 11, 12, 8.* And on the other hand, if the heart of a needy simple one, can but sigh or groan, if it can but chatter as a crane, and mourn as a dove, the Lord will encline his ear, he will hearken and give an answer of peace, *Pf. 12. 5, 1st. 38. 5. 14.*

8. That summary and comprehensive abridgement, that brief re-capitulation and conclusion of Prayer, *Amen*, as it doth expresse our confidence, so also the desire of the heart; It is an adverb of wishing, and hath the same sense, (saith (a) Leigh) with *utinam fiat*, *Mat. 6. 13. Rev. 22. 20, 21.* And by us it is indifferently used for, and hath, the same signification with *So be it*. And therefore, since the abridgement and close of Prayer, doth thus import the wishing and desire of the heart, we must judge the same of the whole, unlesse we will make Prayer become like that monster, described by the (b) Poet, whose members were so disproportioned, unlike and dissimilar, that they could not (except it were by Poets and Painters, who have liberty to feign and devise what they will) be joyned together.

(a) Edw. Leigh, *Crit. sac. nov. Test. verb. amen*, *TON dicitur per modum orationis seu precis Paganis rad. TON*.
(b) Horatius *de arte Poet. humano capiti cervicem pectus equinam, &c.*

9. If we will rest on the apostle *Paul* his exegesis and exposition, *Rom. 10. 1.* If by Prayer we understand the same thing which he did, we must affirm that the hearts desire and Prayer are as *synonyma*, holding out one and the same thing; or I would rather think, that these words contain a description of Prayer, that it is the hearts desire [poured out] to God.

But what need we dispute while the Lord Himself so clearly and in *terminis* resolves the question, and tells us what he (who well knows how to give things their right names) calls and will acknowledge to be Prayer, *Jer. 29. 12, 13.* *Then shall ye call unto me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you, and ye shall seek me and find me when (and never till then) ye shall search for me with all your heart.*

Of the subject of Prayer.

heart. O! then take heed when thou approachest the Throne, that thy heart be not to seek, that it be not gadding abroad after this or that trifle, while thou art speaking to the King: if thou bring not thy heart with thee, thou halt not a tongue, thou canst not speak, if the heart be absent; if it be silent, there can be no voice that He will hear and answer: and therefore, as at all times, so specially when thou art praying, thou shouldst keep thy heart with all diligence, that what comes out of it, may prove the issues of life, *Prov. 4. 23.*

CHAP. V.

Of the subject of Prayer.

Who should and who may not pray:

Jam 1. 6. If any of you lack,—let him ask of God, who giveth to all men, &c.

(a) look with
abeyance of faith
with tears in
your eyes and
your supplica-
tions, in your
hand.

Is. 45. 22. (a) Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth.

THis question may be extended to three ranks of persons, 1. To these who are altogether incapable of this exercise. 2. To these who once were capable, but now are not. And, 3. to those who now are, but ere it belong, shall no more be called to the performance of this duty. And according to this Chapter may be divided in three parts.

(b) *Heb. 7. 25.*

(c) *Rom. 8. 26.*

(d) *Figmen-*

rum anile tur-

barum & Fu-

daorum, qui

augantur De-

um certas ha-

bere precum

formulas, quas

certis horis sin-

gulis diebus

recites, Ger-

hard, bar cap.

179. pag. (ubi)

1116. damnatus

Thaludistae &

Mahumetanus, qui affirmant Deum

ipsum quotidie orare, Tilen. disp. 49. Theol. 2.

SECT. 1. Who may not be said to Pray.

*How (b) Christ and the holy (c) Spirit are said to inter-
ceed for us.*

Each of these three members, may be sub-divided into other two: As to the first, one may be said to be incapable of this exercise, either because it is below him, or because it is above him; thus it is below God to pray, and it is above the reach, and sphere of unreasonable creatures to pray.

1. Then, it were not worth the while to confute the foolish
(d) conceit of those dreamers, who imagined that God, had

set forms of Prayer, which he rehearsed so often every day. But I would ask, to whom and for what should God pray? hath He any Superior or equall whom He should supplicate? and can He be said to want any thing, Himself being the only fountain of all good and happinesse? But here it may be objected, that the holy Ghost doth pray and intercede for the saints, *Rom. 8. 26. 27.* And thus he is called their *Advocat* (επαπακλητος) *Ioh. 14. 16.* And *Ioh. 26. 7.* *Ans.* The learned *Gerhard*, having called it a ridiculous fancy to imagine that God doth pray, *berm. Evang. Cap. 179.* yet *Cap. 176.* affirms, that the holy Ghost (whom he acknowledgeth to be God, equall with the Father) doth intercede and pray for us; yea with groans *Postulare* (f) & *gemitus suos pro nobis interponere*; albeit we cannot think, that he would so far mistake, as properly and truly to ascribe to the Spirit, groans and sighs; (that were blasphemous) yet, he doth so fully and plainly expresse himself, as to the praying and intercession of the Spirit, that there is no ground left for doubting of his judgement in that particular. But, 1. I would ask whether that intercession be an act of worship or not? It were blasphemous to imagine, that one person of the blessed Trinity, doth worship another; and yet it cannot well be conceived, how this intercession can be performed without a religious adoration. 2. If the Spirit intercede for us, it must be by some act of his blessed will; he must offer some (g) desire to the Father: and thus since there is one will and the same acts of the will in the Father, Son and holy Ghost, that intercession may as truly be ascribed to the Father as to the Spirit; and so the Father must pray to himself. 3. If the Spirit be a supplicant, he cannot be said to hear and grant, there must be a difference between the asker and the giver: can one be said to ask from himself? 4. If the holy Ghost doth intercede for us, then he must be first pacified and reconciled with us, he must be more compassionate and tender-hearted then the Father, and he must be willing and (h) desirous we should have, before the Father yeeld; there must be some bowells and tendernesse, some more readinesse, yeelding and condescension in him then in the Father that he interceeds and deals with the Father, that he may come that length. 5.

There

(c) Which, while applied to Christ, 1. *Ioh. 1. 1.* is rendred *Advocat*, and why not also here? (f) *Gerh. berm. Evang. cap. 176. pag. (mibi) 930.*

(g) according to the definition of Prayer, Ch. 3.

(h) not that prayer can change him who is in our mind; *Ioh. 23. 13.* yet it is something previous (a mean for obtaining a grant) to Gods bearing, and answering, which is some actual emanation and result of Gods eternal purpose. See conclusion of this Treatise.

How Christ and the holy Spirit are said to interceed for us

There is but one Mediarour between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. 1. *Tim.* 2. 5.

As to the places objected: To the 1. *Chrysostom*, and *Theophylact* think that by the Spirit (*Rom.* 8. 26. 27.) is meant the miraculous gift of Prayer, then poured out not only upon the Apostles, but on others whom God occasionally called to be the mouth of, and to speak in, their Christian meetings: But that gift being, 1. temporary, continuing only with the Christian Church in her infancy; And, 2. being peculiar only to some, and at certain times, when they were assembled with others; And, 3, not agreeing with the context; And, 4. the word not being found in that sense in any other place, (For the Spirit of grace and supplication promised, *Zeck.* 12. 10. was to be poured out upon all the saints, and converts of the house of *David* and amongst the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*) we cannot approve this interpretation. 2. *Ambrose* by Spirit there understands the new nature, and regenerat part; So the word is frequently used in Scripture; and we can see no inconvenience that can follow upon this interpretation; yet when we compare this with other places which seem to be parallel with, and exegetick of it, we think the third and most common interpretation should rather be embraced, that the Spirit there is said to make intercession for us not properly, as if the holy Ghost did pour out a Prayer for us, but effectively; because he helps and enables us to interceed and pour out acceptable Prayers; thus the Spirit is said to be sent in our hearts (i) crying (that is making us to know that God is, and inabling us to call him) *Abba* Father, *Gal.* 4. 6. *Rom.* 8. 15. And we may observe how the one place explains the other, and the text in the objection for τὸ πνεῦμα κραζόν, the spirit crying, *Gal.* 4. is πνεῦμα ὡς ὁ κραζόμεν, the spirit whereby we cry, *Rom.* 8. and the Spirit of your father, speaking in you, *Matth.* 10. 20.

(i) *Glema*
duplīcter cum
quia fiduciam
filialem in
in cordibus
excitat, cum
quia foris ore
clamare facit,
Patrus in
Gal. 4. 6.

And thus we may see that the Spirit interceeding, must be nothing else; but the Spirit whereby we are inabled to interceed; if we must thus interpret the Spirit crying, why not also the Spirit interceeding? Is there any greater inpropriety in the one phrase then in the other? especially since they are parallel, both holding out one and the same thing, the worke of the Spirit on our heart inabling us to cry and pray.

Yea

How Christ and the holy Spirit are said to interceed for us.

31

Yea, though we made no comparison, and did not reflect on other Scriptures, the words themselves carry in their bosome a clear confutation of that fond glosse in the objection, and point out the true sense and meaning. For. 1. hath the Spirit a tongue to cry, And. 2. to whom would he cry *Abba* Father? whose (k) Son is the Spirit? As to the other, if the Spirit doth truly interceed for us, then whose are those (l) groans that cannot be uttered? 3. What force is there in that reason-added to shew that the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and teacheth us how and what to ask, if his intercession be not causall by helping and enabling us to pray; and while he doth thus inspire and breath in Prayers and supplications in us, by these as his own work, he may be said to interceed for us; our (m) intercession being the effect and result of his assistance, enlargement and manifestations, and so may denominat him, and be called his, as the cause, though not properly, and as the subject. And thus unlesse we will divide what are conjoynd, and pluck out this one word *intercession* from what goeth before and followeth after, there is no occasion offered from this place to *Gerhards* mistake, in which he goeth alone, having none either popish or protestant Divine, (except one whom (n) *Camero* calls (o) *doctissimum Interpretem*) who joyneeth with him of these we have perused: But all the *παράκλητοι*, all the *Arrians*, *Macedonians*, *Acatians* these fighters against the God-head of the holy Ghost may run to this Glosse as their city of refuge. And of late Mr. *John* (p) *Bidle*, though he professeth that he doth not deny the Deity of Christ, yet he taketh much pains in arguing against the Deity of holy the Ghost, and *Gerhard* his (q) glosse of this text, is one of his main pillars.

(k) *Car. unig. filius scilicet, et alius non scilicet, de patre est filius, de patre est Spiritus sanctus, sed ille genitus est, iste procedens: Non omne quod procedit nascitur, quamvis omne procedat quod nascitur, &c. August. cont. Max. Arrian. lib. 3. cap. 14.*

(l) *Spiritus non gemit, sed decendo & efficiendo ut nos gemamus, &c. Camer. preb. de Eccl. pag. (mibi) 222.*

(m) *Non autem Spiritus sanctus in se ipso, seu locutus sum (eistum) ut ait postulat, sed quod in nobis habitans secundum affectus nostros postulat, postulantes nos facit, postulationem nobis inspirat* *Cajetan. in locum (n) Camer. loc. cit. (o) If this doctissimus Interpreter be the learned Beza, (as Would appear from his Annot. on Job. 14. 16.) though he pleadeth that the Spirit in some sense may be called our Advocate, (wh ich we do not deny,) yet he is far from thinking that the Spirit doth formally interceed, but inguestib. such an assertion to the Arrians. Vid. Annot. in Rom. 8. 16. (p) See this impudent man judiciously refused by Mr. Pool in his Παρακλητοικονια. (q) Though he doth assert, yet neither he nor any other, I have seen, do debate the points concerning the Spirit's intercession, and therefore briefly we offered some reasons for refusing that conceit.*

As to the other Scripture, *Joh. 14. 16.* We answer that the word *παράκλητος* is well rendered *Comforter* in our translation; it comes from *παράκαλεω*, which hath diverse significations; *postulationem nobis inspirat* *Cajetan. in locum (n) Camer. loc. cit. (o) If this doctissimus Interpreter be the learned Beza, (as Would appear from his Annot. on Job. 14. 16.) though he pleadeth that the Spirit in some sense may be called our Advocate, (wh ich we do not deny,) yet he is far from thinking that the Spirit doth formally interceed, but inguestib. such an assertion to the Arrians. Vid. Annot. in Rom. 8. 16. (p) See this impudent man judiciously refused by Mr. Pool in his Παρακλητοικονια. (q) Though he doth assert, yet neither he nor any other, I have seen, do debate the points concerning the Spirit's intercession, and therefore briefly we offered some reasons for refusing that conceit.*

tions,

How Christ and the holy Spirit are (aid to interested for us).

(r) *Vid. Scaph.
Pafor. Leigh
Cris: fac. in
verb.*

tions, and according to the subject matter, may be (r) rendered to comfort (as it should be in the place cited) to exhort, to plead, or to pray. But, 2. granting that the word there, and as applied to the holy Ghost might be rendered *advocat*; yet that place can (to little purpose) be made use of for proving the conclusion there laid down: For, he is a poor *Advocat*, or he must have a weak cause who leaves off to plead, and begins to supplicate for his client. The word when rendered *Advocat*

(s) *D. Ham-
mond on Job.
16. 8.*

(as (f) *D. Hammond* observes) is taken from, and must be so interpreted as it agrees with the custome of pleading causes among the Jews (none of which was to supplicate or pray for the plaintiff) to which customes he applyeth the Spirits pleading Christs cause against the world in the three particulars mentioned, *Job. 16. 8, 9, 10, 11.* And *Camero* tells us, that the word both in Greek and Latine, properly signifieth (s) one who's counsel is askt in any difficult case; and the

(t) *Cujus con-
siliium requi-
ritur inve dif-
ficili. Cam.
loc. cit. vid
Ulpian. apud
Gerh. loc. cit.
Paracletus (in-
quit Ulp.) est
qui alicui suo
patrocinio suc-
currit.*

(n) word פִּקְלִיטָא (though barbarous, yet usuall enough among the Jews after their dispersion, and reteined by the *Syrian* interpreter, *Job. 14. 26.*) is, by the *Targum* on *Job 16. 20.* and 33. 23. made use of to render the Hebrew word מְלִיץ which doth signifie one who speaketh distinctly, pertinently, and comfortably; and so the Greek παρακλητης is well translated *Comforter* or *Instructor*; and accordingly our Saviour having applied this epithet to the holy Spirit, fitly subjoyneth, *Job. 14. 26, he shall teach you all things &c.* and this *Gerhard* cannot

(u) *Cam. ubi
supra & in
Math. 19. 3.
p. 179.*

deny; and we may close with his interpretation of the word, (except in the controverted particular too rashly added by him) as being most full and pertinent for clearing what is meant by the word in that place, while, (x) saith he, the spirit is called παρακλητης, thereby is implied, that we receive from him comfort, instruction, firmnesse and stabilitie, governments and counsell, quickning, correction, strength, defence and preservation.

(x) *Gerh. ubi
sup.*

You'll say the same word is applied to Christ, 1. *Job. 2. 3.* to hold out his intercession for us; *Ans.* the subject matter there, doth shew that the word holds out Christs pleading, and interceeding for us, and that he is our *advocat*; but must this ambiguous word signifie the same thing while applied to the holy Spirit? and while the context and parallel places do

exclude

exclude such a signification. Christ is our Advocat with the Father, to plead the pardon for sinners, which He hath purchased with his own blood; [and thus (saith (y) *Beza*) none in heaven or earth, *grants the holy Ghost can without grosse impiety, be called our Advocat.*] Though upon other respects the Spirit also may be called our Advocat.

(y) *Beza* in loc. perenam quodammodo deprecatoris iustitiae. 1018 hoc munus usque adeo uni Christo proprium, &c.

1. Then Christ is our Advocat in heaven, the Spirit our Advocat on earth. 2. Christ is our Advocat with the Father to plead for us, the Spirit is our Advocat against Sathan and the world, to vindicat our name and cause from the calumnies and aspersions of Sathan and his instruments, and to defend and protect us against the power and tyranny of old *Adam*, of the lusts of our hearts within, and of temptations from without. 3. Christ is our Advocat at the throne of Grace, the Spirit is our Advocat within us, informing, directing, strengthening, perswading and comforting us. 4. Christ pleads for an acquittance and discharge to us, because, as our Cautioner, He hath paid the debt; the Spirit pleads with us to run to Christ, and to lay hold on Him for our Cautioner. 5. Christ maketh intercession for us, the Spirit helps us to interceed for our selves, by stirring up holy affections in us, and putting words in our mouth. 6. Christ interceeds by His blood, (it hath a voice and can speak, *Heb.* 12. 24.) the holy Spirit interceeds by His work whereby he helps and assists us to pray, according to the will of God, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. He interceeds by our prayers, which being His work is therefore called His intercession.

And thus we do not deny, nor in the least diminish, the gracious administration of the Spirit, according to that voluntary oeconomy He hath undertaken for the Saints. We desire to admire with thankfulness, this His wonderfull condescension, and to say with the (z) Psalmist, while he pondered the steps of providence, *Who is like unto the Lord? Who shall humbleth Himself;* but it were a poor requittall for such bounty, to ascribe to His infinite Majesty, any work or dispensation that doth (as *Prayer* and *Intercession*) import imperfection, inferiority, subjection or dependence; though what only importeth power, efficiency and influence, should be ascribed to

(z) *Ps.* 113. 56.

(a) Barrad.
Harm Evang.
Tom. 4. lib. 5.
cap. 12.

(b) Salmer.
Tom. 19. lib. 5.
in 1 Tim.
2. pag. 476.
Vid. Lindan.
in concil. diff.
pag. 143.

(c) Swarez
speakes more
cautiously and
modestly then
others: For,
(a) (as he) Re-
gulariter &
publicè non
oramus Chri-
stum ut pro
nobis inter-
cedat ad vi-
tandum scan-
dalum, & ne
videamur ad
illum tan-
quam ad pu-
rum homi-
nem orare,
Swarez de
Virt. & Stat.
Rel. Tom. 2.
lib. 1. de or.
cap. 10. § 16.
38. He doth
not deny this
kind of Prayer
to be of it self
lawfull, but
only because of

the hazard of scandal, which may be guarded against as he granteth; Non est per se & in-
trinsece malum hoc modo ad Christum orare, si recta fide & intentione fiat; id est non
dividendo personas sed naturas, Swar. loc. cit. & Tom. 1. in 3. And for this he citeth Ca-
ret. Cordub. Canisius. (d) Invasio illa non est legitima, & induction est in Haresin,
vel Arianam, vel Nestorianam, &c. D. Forbes. Inst. Hist. Theol. lib. 7. cap. 3. Sect. 13.

Him, as the cause and author; and must denominat the Saints as the subject in which it is terminat. So much for the intercession of the Spirit.

Now we come to speak to that sweet and excellent point, the intercession of our blessed Head for His members on earth. You will say, is He not equal with the Father and Spirit? Phil. 2. 6. Is it not then below such a glorious Person to humble Himself to plead and make intercession? Ans. We shall remove this difficulty when we come to show how Christ doth interceed, whether as God or as man: But that He doth interceed for His people is certain, and cannot be denied by any who acknowledge the Scriptures: See Heb. 7. 25. Rom. 8. 34. 1 Joh. 2. 1. &c.

But let us here take notice of the policy of Papists, who, that they may lay a foundation for the worshipping and invoking of Saints and Angels, maintain, that we may not improve Christs intercession by making it the object of any petition in our prayers; yea, some of them do so speak, as if indeed they denied that he did interceed for us, albeit they would seem to be tender of His honour while they thus plead. [This form of Prayer (saith (a) one of them) as not agreeing to the excellency of Christ, was never heard in the Church, *Christe Iesu, ora pro nobis*, Christ Jesus, pray for us.] [The Catholicks. (saith (b) another) do not pray to Christ to pray for them, lest they should seem, with the Nestorians, to place two persons in Christ, the one of the Son of God, the other of the Son of Mary.] Thus they would cloke the matter while they make way for their idolatry, and provide a plea for their invocation of Saints, as Mediators to interceed for them, since they (c) may not put up a prayer to Christ for that effect: But it may seem strange that our learned Dr. (d) Forbess should joyn with them in this their assertion, being far from complying with them in their design, which

he abominateth, and hath elsewhere judiciously confuted: as for his reasons, they only prove that such a form of petition may be abused; and we do not deny that there is here great need of circumspection, least we confound the natures in the blessed Mediator, and ascribe to the divine that which is proper to the humane Nature: And here some cautions might be set down to good purpose; but the judicious and learned Divine Mr. (e) *Durham*, hath liberat us of that task, having propounded this case in a practical way, to the satisfaction of such who will be at the pains to peruse what he hath said to that point.

(e) *Mr. Durham on Revel. chap. 1. pag. 15, 16.*

But that lawfully, and to good purpose, we may, and need not scruple, to supplicate the glorious Mediator to interceed for us, may appear, 1. Because, what Christ will certainly do, and hath promised to do for us, that we may supplicate Him to do, (the promise being (as shall (f) appear) a sufficient ground and warrant of Prayer) but Christ hath promised to pray for us, *Joh. 14. 16.* and that He doth pray for us the holy Spirit doth testify, *Heb. 7. 25. &c.* 2. For what we are bound to return praise, that we may ask and petition; but the Saints are obliged to praise Christ for interceeding for them, and pleading their cause: *Ergo.*

(f) *Ch. 7. Sect. 1.*

What we are now to speak concerning Christs intercession may be referred to these heads. 1. We shall consider how the Scripture expresseth that point. 2. We will shew according to what nature it is performed. 3. After what manner. 4. We will draw some consolatory inferences. 5. We will point out the grounds of this intercession. And, 6. We will move some questions, and obviate objections.

For the first, if we compare those Scriptures which most expressly hold out this point, we may observe these several steps and (as it were) degrees of Christs intercession. And, 1. in the general, He is said so appear in the presence of God for us; not determining the manner how, nor the consideration under which, nor upon what account, *Heb. 9. 24.* But, 2. we have His office designed, He (while now in the heavens) appeareth there as a Mediator between God and man, ready to cryst and interpose for their reconciliation, *1 Tim. 2. 5.* but not

as a neutral, and as one not concerned in the matter. But, 3. 2. our friend on our side, and a tryster and factor for us, *Heb.* 6. 20. Yea, 4. as engaged by office to plead for us, He appeareth as our Priest to deal and interceed for us, His people, *Heb.* 7. 24, 25. *Heb.* 6. 20. Yea, 5. as being yet more tender towards us, and more neerly concerned in us: He appeareth there as our Surety and Cautioner to pay our ransom, and to offer what Law and Justice can claim for the prisoners liberty; and that He may become, not only our redemption and atonement, and to satisfie for debt already contracted; but also to become Surety for our future carriage, and to become our righteousness, wisdom and sanctification, *Heb.* 7. 22. *Rom.* 5. 11. 1. *Cor.* 1. 30. And then, 6. He appears as our Advocate; not like the Levitical Priests only to plead mercy, but as an Advocate in point of Law and Justice, to plead, that the Captive, whose ransom He hath paid; may be set at liberty, 1 *Job.* 2. 1. He will not only, as an agent, request and sollicit, (though thus alwayes He interceedeth for us, *Heb.* 7. 25.) but also in a legal and judicial way, as our Advocate, He will plead our cause upon the account of full satisfaction to justice. Though all be of meer mercy, as to us who had nothing to pay, yet, our Surety did pay to the utmost farthing what justice did require: and thus, having pleaded our right, and obtained a sentence in our favours, reconciliation being made, and we pronounced just and righteous, as being washed from our sins in His blood, *Rev.* 1. 5. Then, 7. He prepareth a room for us in heaven, and maketh all ready for our welcome and entertainment; And thus He is in heaven as our Harbinger, He is gone before to provide and speak for our lodging: No less do the words import, *Job.* 14. 2, 3. And knowing that we are exposed to many dangers by the way, 8. He purchaseth the protection of heaven, and a guard to convey us, and to defend us from enemies lying in wait to make a prey of us, *Rom.* 8. 34. And, 9. (that which comprehendeth all) He appeareth before the Throne as an Ambassador and publick person, in our room and stead, to act for us, *Heb.* 6. 20. Or rather (that this His condescension be not mistaken) 1. As our head, *Col.* 1. 18. and will He not then

care for the body? 2. As our Lord and King, *Alt.* 10. 36. *Rev.* 19. 16. and will He not be mindfull of His subjects and servants? 3. As our husband, 2. *Cor.* 11. 2. and will He have no bowels towards His spouse, panting in this wilderness after her beloved? 4. As a Father, *Is.* 9. 6. and will He not pity His children? 5. As our elder brother, *Heb.* 2. 11. and will not our *Joseph* deal kindly with us? will He not speak and interceed with the King? &c.

As to the 2. it may be askt, how Christ doth interceed for us, Whether as he is God? Or, 2. as he is man? Or, 3. as he is *Θεοάνθρωπος* God-man? *Ans.* 1. Not as God: here the four first reasons brought against the formall intercession of the holy Ghost have place; which we need not resume. (g) Neither, 2. doth he interceed as both God and man upon the same grounds; for the concurrence of the humane Nature cannot remove any of the absurdities that would follow upon the performance thereof by His God-head alone.

You will say our Divines usually affirm that Christ as Mediator doth mak intercession for us; and as He is Mediator He is both God and man. *Ans.* We know (b) not under what consideration Christ can be said to appear and make intercession for us, if not as our Mediator and Head: and our Divines have justly condemned the doctrine of those Papists, who with *Lombard* and *Thomas* these grand misleaders, do maintain that Christ only, as man is Mediator; yet we deny that there are any (i) *Theandrick* actions, which do flow from, and denominat both the divine and humane Nature, as the proper and immediat fountain: for, as both Natures continue distinct as to their being and existence; (though personally united in the Mediator) So also their operations and properties must not be confounded. There be some actions that only agree to the humane, and others only to the divine Nature; whatsoever is beyond the reach of the creature, and doth not import inferiority and subjection, that must be ascribed to the God-head; but all Christs sufferings, and what belongs to the state of His humiliation, that was proper to the humane Nature; yet so, as that in another kind of causality, the divine Nature might have some influence, and concur in such a man-

(g) I do not deny that some of the ancient Doctors, as Chrysostome and Ambrose, and amongst the modern, Gerhard, Tirlen and others, do seem to be of that opinion, that Christ, as *Θεοάνθρωπος*, doth make intercession.

(h) *Vid.* *Chamier. pass.* tom. 1. lib. 7. (i) *Θεοάνθρωπος* *ἐνέργειαι*, *Dionys. Arcop. epist. 4. ad Gemin. med. vid. Thom. 3. part. quest. 19. art. 1. et Dion. Carthusius in 3. dist. 17. quest. 1.*

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ner as was futable to his infinit Majesty, for compleating, and perfecting these actions, and sufferings of the humane Nature: for, from the divine Nature did flow the value and worth of these; therefore they were meritorious and satisfactory, because they were performed by Him, Who was God-man, albeit as man.

And thus speaking to the particular concerning Christs intercession, Doctor (k) *Voet* doth in a word (and in the by only) clear the question: [Christs intercession (saith he) is an action of the Mediator, as He is Mediator; but to be performed by the humane Nature, which is the only subject of that action,] and we would distinguish and clear the ambiguity of the phrase, which may give occasion to mistake; while any action is said to be performed by Christ as Mediator, the meaning is not that it is performed by, and doth belong unto both Natures, as its immediat subject; (though both those Natures, must necessarily be united in one person in the Mediator, and though both these Natures, may concur in a way futable unto them for compleating these actions, as to their moral value and estimation) but the meaning is, that such an action belongs to His mediatory Office; and He as our Surety performs it for us; albeit it doth flow from, as it's proper cause, and is terminated in, as it's immediate Subject, one of the natures only.

But you will say, did not both the divine and humane Nature concur in these miraculous works which were wrought by Him, while He was on earth? *Ans.* Both did concur, but by two distinct operations; the one humane, the other divine. Thus (saith (l) *Athanasius*) as man, He stretched out His hand, but, as God, He did rebuke and cure the disease. And thus, we deny not that some of Christ's actions were Theandrick, that the divine and humane actions did, in their own way, concur for perfecting the work; But take any one simple action, and thus, as to it's original, it is either divine or humane. It was the God-head that did assume our nature, that raised it from the dead, that is present with the Church to the end of the world, that preserves and governs His Church, that pardoneth sin, that is worshipped, &c. And it is His Man-

head

(k) Giab.
Voet sel. disp.
per. 1. dis. 30.
an Christum qua
Mediator, pag.
516. est actio
Christi Media-
toris, qua Me-
diatoris agen-
do se, secun-
dum naturam
humanam, qua
est immediat-
um prout
subiectum.

(l) Athan.
vult. 4. contra
Arian. dy-
stinctio. 2.
Christi Xp-
i, quod de
deo unigenito
filius de
patre.

head that was born, was crucified, rose again, ascended into heaven, prayed, wept, &c. Albeit we deny not that even, as to these humane actions and sufferings, the Deity of Christ did morally concur, adding worth, and making them to be of infinit value, and satisfactory to divine justice in that they were performed by Him who was Θεάνθρωπος, God-man, though as man; (that is, though the Man-head only did concur as their proper physical cause and immediate Subject) not that we deny that the Deity did support the Humanity, and did concur with, and give a being unto, all it's actions and operations; but that there was, as to this, any thing peculiar (albeit there was a more ultimat and mysterious union) to Christ: For thus, all of us live, move, and have our being from God, and from all the persons of the blessed Trinity, (m) all of them working by one and the same power. And thus the actions of all men might be called Theandrick, and all creature motions Divine, *Act. 17. 28. Job. 5. 17, 19. &c.* And thus we do not, with Papists, deny, that Christ is Mediator according to both natures; yea, we do not exclude His divine nature from His Intercession; for, from it doth flow it's worth and excellency; So that it must prevail with God and obtain a grant: And according to this sense, we will not condemn *Gerhard* (though we like not the phrase) while he (n) saith that Christ, as Mediator and God-man, doth pray, the God-head indeed doth concur in a futeable manner, adding vertue to that sacrifice. But this moral influence is not sufficient to cause the action, which of it self imports inferiority and subjection, to denominat the divine nature. Thus also, according to some impropriety of speech, we may say, that God did pray according to that (o) communication of properties, whereby that which is proper to the one nature, may not only (p) denominat the person, but the other nature: and thus, as it is said, *Act. 20. 28.* that God purchased the Church with His own blood; so He may be said to pray and interceed for the Church. But while we are enquiring after the sense of words, we must not (q) confound the divine and humane Nature,

(m) ἐν τῇ
τριάδι ἵστα-
τόντες ἑαυ-
τοὺς; ἀντι-
στατοὺς, Basil.
mag. lib. 5. ad-
versus Eunom.
Unitatem
nature, volun-
tatis & opera-
tionis confusio-
nem, Ambros.
in Symb. Apost.
cap. 3.

(n) Gech.
barm. cap. 180.
pag. 1141.
Christus ut me-
diator
& sacerdos
& Θεάνθρω-
πος, &c.

(o) Per com-
municationem
idiotem, &c.

(p) Communi-
catis proprie-
tatum alia off-
verbatis, alia
realt, cum De-
us dicitur
proprie angul-
ne redemisse
Ecclesiam de
persona Christi
hoc dicitur in
contrario reali-
ter, at vero
verbaltier de
natura a qua
persona deno-
minatur, viz.
Divina, Ma-
teo. 28. 19.

reg. cap. 11. sect. 6. (q) Ἐξ ἡδονῆς, & οὐκ ἐκ φύσεως οὐρανὸν αὐτῷ ἐννοῦντι & ὑπονοῦντι
Symb. Athanas. vid. etiam Symb. Antioch. & Theoph. in Heb. 7.

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but must ascribe to each of them, their own properties and actions: and here we might shew the consent of the christian Church from the beginning, all of them (r) agreeing in this, that *Christus, ut Deus, adoratur cum Patre, ut homo oratur Patrem*) that Christ, as God, is worshipped with the Father, and that as man, He prayeth to the Father.

As to the 3. Though the thing it self be certain and clearly revealed, yet the way and manner of performance is somewhat mysterious and hidden; concerning which we shall offer some few assertions; The first wherof shall be negative. *Ass.* 1. It seemeth not to agree with that state of glory, to which our blessed Lord is exalted, that He should (r) prostrate Himself before the Father, as He did, while on earth, in the dayes of His humiliation, when He offered up Prayers and Supplications with strong crying and tears, *Heb.* 5. 7.

2. And positively, we need not scruple to say, that Christ now doth interceed by His death and sufferings. If *Abel's* blood, after it was shed, could speak and cry for judgment to be poured on the murderer, shall not the blood of Christ call and cry for mercy to them for whom it was shed, *Heb.* 12. 24. Christ's merit and satisfaction doth cry and plead for a discharge of the debt, the ransom He hath paid doth appear before the Throne, and say, *Ab! shall not she (r) Judge of all the earth do right*; shall not the ransomed Captive be set at liberty? But, this being no distinct part of His mediatory Office from His death and suffering, it cannot be that *Intercession*, which the Scripture holds out as a new ground of encouragement from His ascension and now being in the heavens; and then, though *Abel's* blood did cry, yet, it is not said that *Abel* cryed, but Christ Himself is said to interceed; and therefore there must be some other thing intimated then the merit of His suffering by His Intercession.

But, 3. While some would explain Christ's Intercession by His (u) representing His sufferings and obedience to the Father, I would know what that presenting did import be-

(r) Non potest per eandem naturam adorare quasi servus &c.

adorari quasi Dominus, Ambros. lib. 5. de fide cap. 2. quomodo non Patrem rogat ut homo qui cum Patre exaudivit ut Deus, August. lib. 3. contra Maxim. ad p. 14.

(s) Hanc Intercessionem carnali sensu no metiamur non enim cogitandus est simplex flexus genitum manibus expressis Patrem deprecari Calv. in Rom. 8. 34.

(t) Gen. 18. 25. Apparet ipse assiduus cum morte & satisfactione sua qua vice suis aeterna Intercessionis, & vivae orationis efficaciam habent, Calv. loc. cit.

(u) Quia interpellatio non est humilis supplicatio, sed gloriosa praesentatio corporis sui, quo in his terris sanguine suo, peccata nostra expiavit, Patrus in Heb. 9. 14. & in cap. 7. 25. Diodat. on Rom. 8. 34. Burges on Joh. 17. 3.

yond His being once dead, and now living for ever in the heavens; to which, as another thing, His Intercession is super-added, *Heb. 7. 17, 25.* And I would think, that they who confound His Sacrifice with His Intercession, these two distinct parts of His priestly Office, do, in effect, deny his (x) Intercession: for, the other they cannot deny, to wit, that He once offered up Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice; and that they do not, cannot hold out the full meaning of that Scripture that holds out Christ to be a priest for ever, after the order of *Melchisedech*. See *Heb. 7.* and compare *v. 24.* with, *25.* But if by this presenting of his death and sufferings be meant any kind of expression or pleading upon the account of his merit and satisfaction, the difficulty will remain; for, the question is, how he doth plead and interceded for us?

4. While (y) others would explain Christs Intercession, by his appearing before the Throne, in our name, and as our Cautioner and Advocate, they say little or nothing for clearing the question. For, it is certain, that, 1. Christ is in heaven; And that, 2. He is the head and Saviour of His people, and doth appear for them, and in their name: but still it remains to be shewen, what now he doth for them, and in their name.

5. Therefore, supposing these things as previous and prerequisite to Christs intercession, we think that these expresse it best, who will have it to consist in his earnest and serious (z) *willing* and *desiring*, that his chosen ones, through his blood, should partake of the severall benefits they stand in need of, and that they should have a return to such and such Prayers put up in His name. And that this *willing* and *desiring*, may be called Prayer, may appear from what hath been said, *Chap. 4.* For since Christ doth will such and such good things to be given to His servants; from whom doth he desire? is it not from God? and doth he not direct all his desires to God? and what is that else but to pray to God? But you will say, how doth Christ will and desire good things to us? *Ans.* Certainly not in a superficial formall way, he doth most seriously, tenderly and compassionately will our good; he maketh intercession for us,

(x) *Non dicitur offerat, nam hoc semel fecit, sed iugiter est altera (a cordis) pars, interpellatio, &c.* Beza in *Heb. cap. 7. 25.* vid. *Martyr. loc. com. class. 3. loc. 13.*

(y) *Quæritur quid agat Christus in celo? Resp. apparet, interpellat pro nobis, apparet, munem Christo pro nobis, peccata nostra, in Dei conspectum atque memoriam nunquam veniens, D. Par. in *Heb. 9.**

(z) *Quæritur in interpellatio est constant voluntas, ut Patet auct. τρωανum acceptet, sitque propter illud propitius, &c.* Par. loc. cit. *cap. 7. 25. 6.* in *Rom. cap. 8. 34.* *Diogenes in Rom. 8. 34.* *Burges in Ioh. 17. 2.*

(a) Diodat.
loc. cit.

faith (a) Diodate by fervently desiring our salvation. Ye may take a view of his *willing* from the copy he left on earth, every step of his life was a demonstration of his most earnest and fervent desiring the salvation of his people. But not to stay on particulars, let us survey that last model of his Prayer, solemnly put up for his people, *Job*, 17. O! How many evidences of love and care will that one text afford, and there we will find his *willing* to be reckoned by him as a part of that Prayer, *Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me*, &c. v. 24. *Father, I will*, that, is, as if he had said, *Father, I pray*; and if his *willing* on earth did deserve the name of Prayer, why may not also his *willing* in heaven? it is not less serious, earnest and fervent then it was: distance hath not diminished His affections to His people, but rather, as a tender Father and Husband, He doth the more remember, pity and compassionat his children and spouse, wandering, as it were, in a wilderness, and who can take no rest till they see his face.

(b) In doctâ
ignorantia non
minus mentis
quietatio qua-
renda est quam
in scientia,
Voet. disp. de
arbitr. pag. 126.

(c) Calv. in
Rom. 8. 34.
(d) Vid. Pa-
trum in lo-
cum.

(e) Cajetan
in 2 Tim. 2.
18. Si novis-
simus istos si-
cut novat il-
los Timotheus
intelligeremus
de qua scilicet
Paulus loquitur
3 yet, it
seemeth cer-
tain, that they
denied any
further resur-
rection.

(f) Heb. 12.
23.

6. Albeit (b) silence may often be called the best eloquence, and ignorance the best knowledge, of things not revealed, yet, we may modestly enquire, whether or not Christ doth some times expresse His desires? albeit He doth not now bow the knee and extend the hand (as (c) Calvin speaketh) yet, why should it seem to be inconsistent with His glory to interpose words in behalf of His afflicted members? I do not think that in heaven there will be no use of the (d) tongue; the Scripture seemeth to imply the contrary, *Rev.* 15. 3. and 14. 3. and 7. 9, 10. and 5. 9. &c. Not that with *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. I did think that the (e) resurrection is past already, or, that the spirits of just men, made (f) perfect, had tongues and bodily organs wherewith they praise God, or that these things were not represented to *John* in a vision: but because that form of representation, doth import, 1. That the Angels and Saints in heaven do rejoyce when it goeth well with the Church. And, 2. that they expresse their joy by praising God in that way and manner that agreeth and is futable to their nature and condition; which though it be performed by the will and understanding, yet well deserveth the

the name of a (g) Song: for, God stands not in need of words and outward symbols: Yea, and 3, in that mention is made of singing, speaking, yea, and crying, and that with a loud voyce, it would appear, that thereby is insinuated, that if these blessed spirits had tongues, they would employ them in praising of God, and that after the resurrection, both soul and body, in their own way and capacity, shall joyn and be employed in that blessed work: and if our exalted Saviour, in any case, employ His tongue to speak, will He not? can we imagine that He will not bestow one word for His afflicted members? that for those whom He so dearly loveth, as to (h) wash them in his own blood, He shall not once open His mouth? I think none will scruple to say, that Christ, as man, doth truly and formally praise God, (and though they do not make mention of His words, yet, they do not deny or exclude them) and I know no reason either why we should scruple to say, that He doth as truly and formally (though not in such a (i) servil way as while He was on earth) pray. Amongst the reformed Divines I have perused, (k) D. Hamond, and M. Newton, and M. Goodwin, have expressed themselves most clearly in this point; the first affirming [that Christ doth really pray for us, and joyn His Prayers with ours, &c.] but, Mr. Newton more fully, [we have (saith this (l) reverend Author) an Advocate in Court, who continually hears, at hand on all occasions, to (m) shew his father all his wounds and all his scars, all the prints and all the marks of his bitter, bloody sufferings: ah? Father, may he say, (when there is any thing in agitation for his people) remember what I have endured for them in this flesh of mine, what I have suffered for them in this body here before thee, look upon these wounds and scars, and for my sake be gracious to them, do not deny them their petitions, do not reject them for their un-allowed and bewailed imperfections.] And Mr. (n) Goodwin. saith, [that Christs Intercession is most properly and truly such] But, you will say when doth He thus pray for His servants? we cannot imagine

(g) Hence, in the Schools this kind of expression is called a Speech: vide Scholasticos de locula Angelorum.

(h) Rev. 1. 5.

(i) ἵχ ὡς ὁ-
πέρ ἡ μάρ-
προκλήν δα-
μένον καὶ
προσπιπ-
τα δὲ λικῶς,
&c. Nazianz.

orat. 1. de filio.

(k) D. Ham-
monden Rom.
8. 16, 34.

(l) M. New-
ton on Job. 19.
10. pag. 168.

(m) Posulat
iura factum.

stando signa
passionis, iura
merito offeren-
do pietatem
qua passus est,
Cajetan. in
Heb. v. 25.

(n) M. T.
Goodwin,
triumph of
faith, from
Scot. 5. chap. 6.
Inter pontifi-
cium, vid. Va-
lent. in 3.

q. 21. p. 1. af. 3. Swarcz Tam. 4. de incar. disp. 45. sect. 2. & de statu rei: orat. 4. lib. 1. de
or. cap. 10, 228. 15. Tolet. & Maldon. in 16. Job.

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that our blessed Lord doth alwayes pour out vocall Prayers; and though that were granted, yet, He having so many servants exercised with so many tryalls, and standing in need of so many mercies, what ground (may such a supplicant say) have I to beleeve, that my Saviour is now saying to the Father, *Lord; be gracious to such a poor one?* *Ans.* 1. Such as will thus object, do seem to lay too much weight upon that which we only propounded in a problematick way: Albeit some weak Saints, who are much affected with sensible demonstrations of Christs love and care, may draw some comfort from His words; yet, it is a grosse mistake to think, that mentall prayer doth not as well prevail with God, or that our Saviour would be lesse mindfull of, and compassionat towards, His people, though He did not pour out words in their behalf. There is no question amongst the godly and orthodox concerning Christs bowells and care, nor concerning the acceptance and successe of Christs Intercession, however it be performed; but only concerning the manner and way that is most futable to His glory and exaltation; and as to that there is some diversity of opinions. Yet, 2. this objection will also have place against Christs *willing* and *desiring* (which I think should not be questioned) as well as against His words and the expressing of those desires: for, though the mind and will be more active and comprehensive, then that the tongue can follow and expresse all the thoughts and purposes that are there; yet, Christs humane will being of a finite capacity (though advanced to the greatest height of Glory and Majestie that the creature is capable of) it cannot at once, by so many distinct and particular acts, be conversant about all the severall cases of the Saints on earth, and so cannot offer up a particular desire for every Saint in every condition. And thus, for compleating the comfort of believers under their severall tryalls and exigences, we must look up to the divine Nature, and rest (o) securely under the shadow of our blessed Mediator, who is God and man: and in this (p) D. *Tilen* hath hit right, when he saith, [that it requires the help of the divine Nature, at once, to hear the Prayers of all the Saints on earth] but in that, he affirmeth the divine Nature to

(o) *Pf.* 57 1.
(p) *D. Tilen.*
frut. part. 2.
disp. 10. sect.
16. omnium
dominum pre-
ces audire (ad-
dit ille & of-
ferre) divine
in pontificis na-
tura
opem desiderat
passim tamen
& hac ipsa
thesi notatodo-
ces Christum,
ut Oratione
eor, pro nobis
interpellare.
vid. thes. 12.
& 20 & disp.
12. thes. 34.
& 85.
sem. Opus;
disp. 20.

interceed for us and to present our Prayers, we cannot joyn with him for the reasons brought against the holy Spirits intercession. Can Prayer be separated from religious adoration? and can (q) one person of the blessed Trinity invocat, or be invocated, without the other two? *ἡ εὐχὴ πρὸς τὸν υἱὸν καὶ τὸν ἅγιον πνεῦμα*, saith Greg. Nazianzen, *Orat.* 37. And to whom shall the second person of the blessed Trinity present our prayers, if not to Himself? and with whom shall He interceed, if not with himselfe? which were grosse once to imagine, and to what purpose who can shew? Its true, Christ, as man, doth adore and invocat the whole Trinity, and as God, He doth as truly as the Father and holy Ghost (r) hear and (s) answer, the distinction and infinit distance of Natures in the Mediator, being a sufficient plea against all the cavils that carnall reason can suggest to the contrary.

But, (that we may speak to the objection) the infinit knowledge of the divine Nature in the Redeemer is a sweet ground of consolation to all that come unto Him; for, thus our blessed Mediator must know all our wants, whereupon must follow an unconceivable communication and manifestation thereof to the humane Nature, to which the divine is personally united. So that though the man-Christ, be not omniscient (as some Lutheran Divines do imagine) yet He is multi-scient; and albeit the glasse of the Trinity, in which the Saints in glory do see here what is done on earth, be a popish dream, yet, the humane Nature of Christ, being personally united to the God-head, doth from thence, by reall communication, receive, and alwayes hath a perfect knowledge of the conditions of his members, and of their particular needs and straits: for, as man, He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, (*Heb.* 4. 15.) and so He must know them; yea, while on earth, and in the state of His humiliation, he had such an measure of knowledge, that none needed to testifie to Him of man; for He knew all men, and what was in man, *Joh.* 2. 24, 25. But yet, the main pillar of our confidence must be, 1. His divine and infinit omniscience. 2. The pryce he hath payed,

(q) *Vid.* Thom. 2. 2. *quæst.* 81. art. 3. ad. 1. *Quæst.* 84. art. 1. ad. 3.

(r) *Ex hoc enim rogat quia minor est patre quo vero ej æqualis est, exaudit cum patre, August.*

lib. 1. *de Trinitat.* cap. 10.

(s) *Unlesse we say with Francis-*

ciscus, a S. Clara, in his exposition of the English Confession [that the God-head and not the persons, formally and as such, but only as they are identified with the God-head are the proper and formal object of worship] do Horas (in quiville loc. cit.) communicat ipsis personis divinis gratias sumptis (sub ratione formali constitutione personarum, quæ est ratio primo compen-

latio negant subesse terminum formalem adorationis, sed hoc desunt solum relationibus autem prout identificantur cum essentia &c.

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His satisfying the justice of God. And thus, 3. the cry of His blood, which doth answer every case and condition of all the Saints: there is not a petition thou canst put up, but Christs blood doth (and thus himself may be said to) joyn with thee, and say, *Lord, hearken to that poor soul, for whose sake my blood was shed; deny not to it what I have purchased for it.* And though this voyce and intercession be metaphoricall, yet, it is reall and most prevailing; though thus rather the Sacrifice then the Priest doth interceed, yet, it is the basis and ground, it is the foundation and the meritorious cause of the prevalency of the other, that proper and formall intercession. And thus, Christ alwayes, in all cases, and for every one of his servants, doth cry, and God alwayes hearkeneth and doth answer that cry. The Lord did hear the cry of *Abels* blood from the ground, *Gen. 4. 10. 11.* He heard the cry of blood; *Of, 1. a meeke man, 2. Of a sinner,*

(t) *Zech. 13. 7.*

(u) *sic Gerhard & alii quos citat*

Harm. de 10.

sur. Cap. 9. sic

Cajet in Rom.

8. 3. factis (in-

quit) monstran-

do signa passi-

onis, &c.

(x) *Cicero de*

Christi sunt

lucidiores &

pulebriores so-

lis radiis,

Chryl. apud

Gerh. loc. cit.

(y) *Joh. 1. 14.*

16.

(though evangelically righteous) 3. From the ground. 4. Pleading for vengeance against the murderer; And shall he not hear the cry of his blood, who was, 1. His (t) fellow; who, 2. knew no sin; and which, 3. is now in heaven; and which, 4. pleadeth for mercy (in which the Lord so much delighteth) and that upon the account of satisfied justice? The cry of blood is very loud, though it were the blood of a slave, how much more the blood of the only begotten Son of God?

And thus, 4. This is the fourth ground of consolation, His appearing in heaven, and following the cry of his blood shed on earth; His appearing before the judge in that body, that was killed: and thus (u) some do think that the scars of his wounds do now and shall for ever remain, and that these are no blemishes nor imperfections, but triumphant monuments of His victory over the devil, of his unconceivable love towards lost man; and so many witnesses and Advocats, to plead for his afflicted members. O 1 (saith (x) *Chryostom*) the prints of his wounds are more beautifull, and resplendent then the beams of the Sun.

And as to his proper and formall, yea and vocall, intercession, as while on earth, he did pray for his followers, and (y) promiseth to pray for them in some particular cases, and speciall exigencies, and for some particuler mercy, to some particular

particular (2) persons, so while in heaven, he may upon such and such occasions interpose for his people. Though we cannot exactly discover, nor particularly and peremptorily determine what Christ saith and doth in heaven for us; yet, by reflecting on the copy and samplar of his intercession, which is registrat in the word, we may conjecture what he doth there; and though we should only say, that Christ in the generall did interceed by a verball and outward expression of his desire for his people, (though there be no ground for such a limitation, but much to the contrary) yet were not this very comfortable? albeit in his solemn farewell Prayer *Joh. 17.* He did not put up any particular petition for any one of the disciples, but in the generall did interceed for all the eleven, yea, and for all these who, to the end of the world, were to believe through the gospel, they were to preach, *v. 20.* Yet, the disciples were no lesse refreshed and benefited thereby then if severally he had prayed for every one of them. The Lord well knows the meaning of Christs Prayers, and will, in return to them, make an application to every one as their need requireth, and he will no lesse hear, and answer Christ, Praying for all his members, then if he only prayed for one of them.

(2) Luk. 22.
32.

O! then lift up your heads, and shout for joy all you disconsolated ones; *Joseph*, your brother liveth, he hath moyen in court, ye shall not starve, he will provide for you the best of the land, the good land of *Goshen*; he will interceed for you, the king can refuse him nothing, he hath taken off his ring, and put it on *Josephs* hand, and hath set him over his house, that according to his word all the people may be ruled, *Joh. 5. 22. Eph. 1. 22. Mat. 28. 18.* What need you fear, though your condition be as sad as *Jobs* was; if with him (*Joh. 19. 25.*) ye will remember that your Redeemer liveth, and for this very end and purpose that he may make intercession for you; his trade and employment in heaven is to plead for you, *Heb. 7. 25.* The (a) smoak of his incense ascends up before God forever, he will not cast thee out of his Prayers, he will not forget thee nor suffer thy cause to miscarry, *he ever liveth to make intercession for thee.* What though thou canst but sigh

Gen. 47. 31
Joh. 14. 27
Gen. 41. 40
41.
Mat. 28. 18.

(b) Rev. 8.4

sigh and groan, though thou canst but chatter like a crane, and mourn like a dove; what though thou canst not speak, when thou comest before the king: O! but thy Advocat knowes well what to say in thy behalf; he is eloquent and well acquainted with the language of Canaan, he can draw up thy bill and order thy cause aright, there is no imperfection or defect, no inequality in his intercession; and the judge will passe over thy roaving and distempers, he will not take advantage of thy distracting thoughts, of thy deadness, and bewailed imperfections, he will hearken to what thy Advocat saith for thy cause, and accordingly will pronounce a favourable sentence, 1. *Joh.* 2. 1, 2. *Joh.* 11. 42. And now thou mayest answer *Solomon's* question, *Prov.* 20. 6. and say thou hast found a faithfull one whom thou mayest safely trust, he will not betray thy cause, *Heb.* 2. 17. He is not so taken up with the multitude of clients and causes as to forget thee, he never lost a cause wherewith he was intrusted, *Joh.* 6. 37. 39. and he cannot dy, and thou be forced to imploy another who knowes not well where to begin; he ever liveth, *Heb.* 7. 25.

Ah! (you will say) but who will plead the cause of a money-lesse man, I have not so much as some few tears to offer unto him. *Ans.* He will for (b) his own sake appear for those who have (c) fled for refuge to lay hold on him, he cannot refuse his honest supplicants, He hath not an heart to reject them, he will in no waies upon no termes put them off, *Joh.* 6. 37. His name is (*the poor and despitous friend*) *Isa.* 61. 1, 2. *Mat.* 11. 5. He is our friend and neer kinsman, he will do it freely, he is not so near to Angels, he took not on him their nature; *Heb.* 2. 16. they are not called his brethren; but this is our priviledge, *Heb.* 2. 11. yea he is yet nearer unto us, he is our Father, *Is.* 9. 6. yea we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones, *Eph.* 5. 30. What need we then fear to come unto Him?

Ah! (but will the doubting sinner say) may not the Advocat play His part and plead well, and yet lose His cause, I am such a wretched sinner, what can be said in my behalf? *Ans.* though he undertake thy cause, yet he will plead in his own name,

(b) 1 King.
19. 34. and,
20. 6.

(c) *Heb.* 6. 18.

name, he hath moeyen with the judge, he is one with him, *Job.* 10. 30 Though he be the Son of man, yet he is also the Son of God; and will the Father then reject his suit? he desires him to ask and promifeth to give, *Pf.* 2. 7, 8. and will he not keep his word? And the Son professeth that he is alwayes heard, *Job.* 11. 42. And wilt thou doubt any more of the successe of his intercession? Ah! shall the (f) wonderfull Counsellor, the Prince of peace, he who is *Immanuel*, God with us, interpose between God and us, and shall he not prevail and make peace? And, O! what matter of consolation may it be to all those who have fled in unto him, that we have an Advocat so nigh to God, and so nigh to us? He is our (g) brother, and Gods (h) fellow and equall; That we have, (g) *Joh.* 20. 17. (h) *Zech.* 13. 7. *Phil.* 2. 1. 1. such a kind and compassionat, 2. such a great and powerful Advocat, 3. such a trustie and faithfull Advocat, what need we then fear? 1. If money be required, behold our Surety with our ransom in his hand, that inestimable pryce of his blood, 1 *Tim.* 2. 6. 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. 2. If power and authority, behold our king sitting at the right hand of God, highly exalted above all principalities and powers, to whom is committed all power in heaven and earth, *Phil.* 2. 9. *Mat.* 28. 18. 3. If requests, favour and entreaties, (which prove very effectually with the ingenuous) behold our intercessor to supplicat and entreat for us, *Heb.* 7. 25. *Rom.* 8. 34. If justice complain, behold a ransom and satisfaction to the outmost: if mercy must also be acknowledged and dealt with in a suitable way to its sovereignty and freeness, behold intreaties and supplications; behold a friend thus to interpose for us, so that we may here apply that word, *Heb.* 7. 25. *he is able to save to the outmost*; or all manner of wayes (for so the (i) words may also be rendered) by all means he will have our happiness and salvation promoted and secured to us: Yea, and here we may take in a third, he is not only able to save to the outmost, that is, perfectly and compleatly, and, as it were, every bit and crumb. And, 2. by all manner of wayes and means: but also, 3. at all (k) times and for ever. He was the Saviour of the Jews as well as of us Gentiles, and he will save for ever. His salvation shall never be lost,

(i) *Εἰς τὸ πάντας, id est, perfecte, ita viz ut nihil ad eam salutem possit amplius desiderari, Beza in locum.*

(k) *Salvare in perpetuum, Theophyl. in locum, to perpetuity, Ham. in loc.*

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his ransomed ones shall never perish; and all of Christ, his di-
 vinitie and humane nature, do concur for our salvation, and all
 his life was employed for us. 1. His birth; *for unto us a child
 is born, unto us a son is given*, Is. 9. 6. 2. His death, *he
 dyed for us*, 1 Thes. 5. 10. 3. His rising again, *and living
 for ever*, Rom. 4. 25. Heb. 7. 25. Thus all of Christ, his
 life first and last, and every period of it, laid out for us, he is
 wholly for us. And, ah! will not we be for him wholly? Ah!
 I remember ye are no more your own, he hath bought
 you at a dear pryce, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. O! view the several
 steps of your salvation, what a mystery of wisdom, love,
 (l) 1 Sam. 23. care and condescension may appear in it. *Is it not well (l) or-
 3. dered and sure in all things?* And now, what can hell and
 Sathan say? what can thy conscience alledge? yea, what can the
 holy law and justice of God object against thee who trusts in
 his name? Its true, hell can never be satisfied, thou hast prin-
 cipalities and powers to wrestle with, though thou be justi-
 fied through faith in his blood, his ransom and intercession
 (m) Math. 23. make hell to rage, the (m) strong man must be disquieted
 29. when he seeth his house spoiled, and the captive set at liberty;
 he will pursue, but he shall not overtake, he shall not be able to
 bring back (though he may vex and molest) the prisoner:
 And our blessed Lord *shall bruise him under thy feet shortly*,
 Rom. 16. 20. And in the mean time, all the calumnies and re-
 (n) Rev. 12. proaches, all the lybells and challenges which this (n) *accuser* of
 10. the brethren can bring against thee, shall be cast over the bar;
 he hath no moeyen at court, he will get no hearing: and
 therefore, the Apostle had reason to break out in that tri-
 umphing exultation, and say, *who* (either in hell or earth,
 for in heaven there is none) *shall lay any thing to the charge
 of justified sinners?* who is the devil or man, dar challenge
 them? Is not Christ at the right hand of God, appearing
 there for us, to go betwixt us and all the accusations can be
 brought against us? If any can object against the worth of
 his blood, the sufficiency of the pryce he hath payed and the
 grounds of his intercession, let him speak, but otherwise
 the sinner is secure, Rom. 8. 3, 34. 1 John 2. 1. Oh! but
 you will say, I know it is so of a truth, devils and men cannot
 wrong

wrong me ; but, can I not wrong my selfe? may I not through my folly ask a serpens in stead of a fish, nay and take it into my bosome, till it sting me to death? *Ans.* Thy Advocate will not undertake a wrong cause, he will not wrong thee, though thou wouldest wrong thy self ; he will appear for thee, and against thy foolish suit, and he will say, Lord, pity that poor deluded creature for whom I have shed my blood, (o) grant not his foolish desire, further not his wicked device against himself ; but though he hath askt a (p) scorpion, let him have an egge. And the (q) father will say, let it be so, let him have a corrosive, as most profitable rather then a cordiall to feed his disease ; let him have a bitter potion for his health (will the great Physician say) rather then that delicious cup of poyson which he desires ; he will give what is good but he will suffer no evil to touch him, *Pf.* 84. 11. *Pf.* 121. 7. And if at any time for thy tryall, he suffer thee to fall, he will raise thee up again ; thou shalt not for ever be left in the snare, thou canst not (r) utterly perish, none is able (neither Sathan nor thy lusts) to pluck thee out of Christs hands, and he will not quite his grips for one that is weaker then himself, he will never part with thee, *Joh.* 10. 28.

(o) *Pf.* 140 8.
(p) *Luk.* 11.
11.
(q) *Mat.* 7.
11.

(r) *Pf.* 37. 14.

But you will yet say, O I but as we are thus ready to mistake ; so also to forget, or not mind our condition, our wants and necessities, and we are exposed to so many tryalls, temptations and hazards, that we cannot foresee them. *Ans.* But yet our Redeemer and Head discerns them all afar off ; he did foresee *Peters* fall ; and prayed for his recovery, and thus provided a remedy before the patient knew of his disease, *Luk.* 22. 31, 32. He will not wait till we employ him, he will do as our need requireth, though we be not sensible, and do not know what we stand in need of.

O I but you will reply, if I did stand in need of some few things only, this were some door of hope ; but my wants are so many that I cannot expect a supply of them all ; What, shall I have so many helps and so much provision for my journey ? shall *Manna* daily be rained down on my tent, while I am in this wilderness, and the immortall crown of glory put

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on my head so soon as I enter into the promised land? If I were a *Moses*; *Daniel* or *Job*, it were not so much; but, how can I believe that such a vile and wretched sinner as I shall be thus dealt with? *Ans.* O I but behold thy Advocat with a pryce in his hand, to lay out for all thy debts, and to purchase all thy mercies: if the cry of his blood do not outcry thy sins, if his merits be not greater then the mercies thou desirest, thou mayest fear; but since his treasures can never be exhausted, since they are indeed such as the Spanish ambassadour (alluding to the golden mines in *India*) said; his Masters were without a bottome. O then I let your joy be full, the father will look over all thy imperfections and blemishes, all thy sins and provocations, though never so great and many; and he will look to him who stands at his right hand, who hath made a mends for all the wrongs thou hast done; and who is the (/) propitiation for all thy sins, and he will say, I pity this ungrate wretch, I freely pardon all his offences for thy sake, since he hath come unto thee and given thee his employment; since he hath intrusted his cause to thee, it shall not miscarry; I can deny thee nothing, let him have his desire, ask what he will he shall have it, *Mat.* 7. 7. &c. And our blessed Advocat will turn to thee and say, I have dispatched your businesse, ask and spare not, and whatsoever ye shall ask, be it never so great, if good for you, I will give you my word (which is surer then all the bonds ye can imagine) ye shall receive it, that your joy may be full, *Job.* 16. 23, 24. *Job.* 14. 13, 14. &c. Oh! will you ponder these strong supports of faith, these sure grounds of consolation; and ye who did never yet fully believe, nor could be comforted by that great word of (t) promise, be (et down by *Rom.* 8. 28. I did indeed (will you say) think that God did bestow many good things on his honest servants here, and that all should be well with them hereafter; but, that all things, all the crosses and losses, all the tryalls and various dispensations of providence that befall them here in their pilgrimage, should contribute and work together for their good. I never could be perswaded to believe, I did not imagine that such a thing was possible, especially since sense and reason,

and

(t) Though it
be set down by
way of narra-
tion.

and the daily complaints of the Saints did step in, as so many evidences and witnesses, to depone, that it was not so. O! ye jealous and suspicious ones, ye who walk too much by sense, and are so (u) slow of heart to believe this word of truth; O! thou who dost not prize thy priviledge, and art not thankfull for thy mercies, which thou wilt not know or acknowledge, remember who Christ is, and what he is to thee, what he hath done and suffered for thee, and what now is his work and businesse; what desires he (x) continually puts up for thee; and be no more jealous of him, but rebuke thine own unbelieve. O! thou child of Light, who hitherto hast (y) walked in darknesse, cast off thy sables and mourning attire, and run to the full breasts of Christs *Intercession*, and suck from thence matter of all joy and consolation. O! remember your Redeemer liveth, and that he liveth for (z) ever to make intercession; his *τεπνον*, his great work and businesse in heaven, is to plead for and procure what he desired to his servants while he was on earth, viz. the fulnesse of their joy, that his (a) joy may remaine in us, and that our joy may be full. As for the grounds of this intercession, and the reasons why our blessed Saviour doth undergo such a work and employment for us, we shall only name three.

1. The office he hath undertaken, he is *the high Priest of our profession*, Heb. 3. 1. And he will be *a faithfull high Priest to make reconciliation*, Heb. 2. 17. he is *a priest for ever*, Heb. 6. 2. and therefore he will for ever (b) *make intercession* for the people, Heb. 7. 26. He cannot offer up a sacrifice, he is in glory and cannot now die; but he is still a priest and must be doing, and therefore he will interceed; he lived on earth to execute the one part of his priestly office, to offer up himself for the sins of his people; though he did preach and pray, yet his sacrifice was the *τεπνον* of his life on earth; and now he liveth in heaven, and his main work there, is to

(o) Luk. 24. 25.

(x) See Catech. quest. 44. *Christ executeth the office of a priest in making continuall intercession for his people.*

(y) 1st 50. 10.

(z) Παρτοτα *ζωεις το ειναι* *sempet vivens ad hoc ut interpellat* Eras.

transl: *semper vivis ad supplicandum* Cal. transl: Ital. transl:

(a) 1oh. 15. 11.

(b) Tea Swartz doth not only think, that Christ now maketh continuall intercession; but he reprehends

Cllichtovæus for affirming, that Christ, while on earth, did not alwaies pray: for (saith he) his ministry and sufferings, did not divert his

godly mind from divine contemplations and praises, &c. yea his sleep, (which seemeth a strange paradox) did not hinder him, albeit some times, in a speciall manner, he be said in the Scripture to pray, as going about that exercise in a humane way, by dependance and restenion upon the imagination applicando intellectum, ut indigentem Phantasiam;

Swaz. loc. cit. lib. 1 cap. 1, Sect 7.

make

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make intercession for us ; he still executes his kingly and propheticall office, he still rules and defends us as our king, he yet stands at the door and knocks, he is the great prophet and instructor of his people ; and, what are we ? it is our honor that we are his underlings, his ministers and servants : and therefore he will also be a priest for ever ; and since there is no other part of that office remaining now to be executed, no other part that can fit his condition and beseem his glory, he must interceed, and thereby answer the type. When our high priest goeth in to the holy of holies, he must bear the tribes on his heart, their names must be engraven there, and appear for them and in their name. He will not be called a titular priest, he will not have an empty stile, if he be a priest for ever he will ever be acting as a priest ; he will not keep the name for what is already past, there must be some present office (and that not idle and without work) and employment, some thing to answer the word, else he would disdain it ; and thus he having while he was on earth purchased a pardon for us, our peace and reconciliation with God, all the mercies we stand in need of, and the immortall crown to be put on our head when we have finished our course, he will now in heaven plead and maintain our right, and see us put in possession of these things he hath purchased to us.

2. His love, that mysterious and unsearchable love (whose (c) Ephes. 3. dimensions we cannot fathom) will set him awork to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can think or ask ; he who spared not his own blood for us, will spare no pains for promoting our happiness, his glory will not make him forget his spouse in her rags, he must still be acting for us, he must have an hand in every step of our happiness ; as he is the author, so he must be the finisher (of it, *Heb. 12. 2.* As he was the author to purchase, so he will be the finisher to effect, and to plead for the accomplishment of our salvation ; as he is a faithfull, so he is a mercifull, high priest ; he will leave no means unessayed for procuring our reconciliation and promoting our comfort and felicity, *Heb. 2. 17.*

3. His sympathie, his fellow-feeling, the head in heaven is sensible, and doth complain of the pain his members on earth

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earth do suffer, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Act. 9. 4. *He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,* *Is.* 53. 3. He is, 1. a man, and as our brother he is affected with our troubles and afflictions. But, 2. he is a man of sorrows, which he did bear for us; he was wounded for our transgressions, and will he not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities? *v.* 4, 5. And, 3. he was acquainted with grief, and that not only, that thereby he might purchase our joy and comfort, that his grief might be a plaister to heal all our wounds, *v.* 5. But also, that by that experience, he might learn the more to sympathize and be touched with the feeling of our sores, and might be the more fit and able to pity the tempted and afflicted, *Heb.* 2:18. and, 4. 15, 16. O! how doth his bowels yearn towards us in the day of our trouble? he pitieth us and cannot forbear; he must help, he must plead and interceed for us; Yea, not only, 1. when we are following duty, and meet with crosses in our way; But, 2. also when we are out of the way, and are eating the fruit of our evil doings, and smarting because of our sins: Yea and, 3. he pitieth us when we are grieving him; not only our crosses, but also our sins do move him to compassion, and stir up his tender bowels; he not only sympathizeth with us, while we are in the furnace, but also while we are (d) wallowing in the mire. O! what a strange inference and connexion must there be between our sinning and grieving of him, and his sympathizing with us and pleading for us? and yet, the Scripture holds out, not only a connexion and compatibility of these together, but also some kind of inference and illation, as if our sins did move and prevail with our compassionate Saviour to interceed for us; *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father,* 1 *Joh.* 2. 1. Ah! should it not rather have been said, if any man sin not, Christ will be his Advocate, but if he sin, he who came to (e) destroy the works of the devil, will not own such a one who doth the devils work? But yet, for thy comfort, O mourning sinner, its writtē, *If any man sin, &c.* Its true, it is written that thou shouldest not sin; *these things write I unto you that you sin not,* saith the Apostle, by way

(d) 2 *Pet.* 2.
(e) 1 *Joh.* 3. 8.

of

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of preface, and to ward off a mistake that we should not sin, is the end and designe of all our rods and mercies, of all the Scriptures and of Gods works towards us, of Christs death, intercession, &c. But yet, if any man sin out of ignorance, frailty, &c. Christ pitieth them, he will not desert their cause, he will not justify them in that, nor plead for a liberty for them to sin; but he will plead for a pardon, and that they may be preserved from sin there after. Ah then beware thou abuse not this mercy and rare priviledge, say not we will sin that Christ may pity us, and plead for us: its a sure signe of a gracelesse soul to say, let us add sin to sin, that grace may abound: how doth the Apostle abominat such a vile inference? *Rom. 6. 1.* Though the Lord, to magnifie the riches of his free grace, may make *grace abound where sin hath abounded*, *Rom. 5. 20.* yet if thou wilt cause sin abound, because grace hath abounded, it is an evidence that grace hath not, and (if thou continue in that desperat resolution) never shall abound to thee; and though Christ will plead for sinners, yet if thou dare sin that he may plead for thee, thou hast reason to fear that thou art none of those for whom he doth, or will plead.

But you will say, if Christs intercession be such a sure and exquisite ground of consolation and confidence, the people of the Jews must then have been in a sad condition, they being destitute thereof. *Ans.* There be two extreames which wee should here shun; the one making it begin too early; the other making it too necessary, and laying too much weight upon it. As to the 1. Some imagine that Christ before his incarnation did interceed, and thus as God [for then he was not man] he must appear, and pray for his people: We will not repeat what hath been already said against that opinion, only now let us briefly view the arguments already brought; or which we conceive may be made use of for that strange (as it appeareth to us) assertion.

1. It may be objected, that we have the Mediators reverend interposse represented to us in that parable of vine-dressers interceeding with the master, *Luk. 13.* beside what is holden forth by the typicall services pointing out Christs intercession.

casion. *Ans.* We need not now run to that acknowledged rule, (d) *Symbolick Theology is not argumentative.* We must not extend a parable beyond it's scope: and it is certain, the (e) intent of this parable was nothing else but to hold out the Lords long-suffering and patience towards that people, and the inevitable ruine of all those who notwithstanding would continue in their unbelief and disobedience. And as for the vine-dresser, who interceeds that the fig-tree might be spared, (f) *Theophylact* thinketh that every man is the dresser of his own vine. (g) *Cajetan* will have *Atiabach*, the Arch-angel (who, saith he, was set over the Jews to be their Guardian) to be this vine-dresser. Others (as (h) *Theophylact* in his second conjecture) will have every mans proper tutelar Angel to be this vine-dresser and intercessor; the English Divines do think the faithfull Ministers to be their vine-dressers: for, they, like (i) *Paul* and *Apollo*, do plant and water the vine-yard; and, like *Moses*, *Samuel* and *Amos*, do interceed for the people committed to their charge.

And Christ, as *Cajetan* thinketh, is rather the Lord then the dresser of the vine-yard: But, though we would yeeld Christs Intercession to be here adumbrated, as certainly it was in several types; yet, that is so far from concluding the point, for which it is alledged, that it doth sufficiently confute the same: For, what is typified, is not as yet exhibited; and therefore these shadows, as useles, must evanish when we may behold the substance and truth.

3. *Object.* Sympathy is a main ground of intercession: but there was sympathy flowing from a covenant-relation before the incarnation: *Is. 63. 9.* In all their afflictions he was afflicted, in his love, and in his pity he saved them. *Exgo.*

Ans. These words are spoken of the Father, the Angel of whose presence is said to save them, and whose Spirit is said to be vexed, v. 10. as usually in Scripture the holy Ghost is called the Spirit of the Father, so by the Angel of Gods presence there, judicious Interpreters do understand the Mediator, the eternal Son of God: so that the former words cannot be meant of him, according to that appropriation of works and attributes which is frequent in the Scriptures; albeit it

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(k) See the English Divines and Dio. dati on the place.
 (l) A reverend the Divine whose memory is precious in this Church (whose arguments may be abused; and drawn a greater length then they will go, if we were (as we may conceive) intended by the Author) doth grant what we have here alledged from him; and which of it self is most certain; and by that concession giveth us ground to interpret his assertion, as spoken rather of a symbolick and typical, then proper and personal intercession; as may also further appear from the several replies here made to what is objected from him, and therefore do we now mention that judicious Divine, not that we might confuse, but that we might thus essay to vindicate his assertion.

be certain, that as to the thing it self, which is here spoken of, none of the persons of the blessed Trinity must be excluded: And therefore we answer, 2. That this is a metaphorical and borrowed kind of Speech, taken from the manner of men, as the Jewish Doctors (cited by the (k) English Divines) well observe; like unto that kind of expression in *Deut.* 32. 10. *Psal.* 17. 8. *Zech.* 2. 8. &c. And therefore sympathy in the Lord Jehovah (as a (l) judicious Divine, speaking to this purpose, saith) doth only import, 1. That he knoweth the afflictions of his people. 2. That he knoweth them; and so this kind of sympathy cannot infer intercession: otherwise all the persons of the Trinity must be said to intercede for us. But that sympathy, which we made the proper and immediat ground of Intercession, was that real humane whereby he is said to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, *Heb.* 4. 15.

As for Christs delight in the habitable parts of the earth, *Prov.* 8. 31. and his good will to his people before the incarnation; which from that learned Author may be alledged as a branch of the former Objection. We answer, Those who have known this judicious man, or are but a little acquainted with his Writings, will say, that such as would alledge from him such grounds for that assertion, do wrong themselves and their cause. For, in them is no other thing held forth, but Christs love towards lost man, his purpose to procure their reconciliation with God, and his readiness in due time to take on their nature, and in it to suffer and do what may contribute for their happiness; but they hold out no ground for his Intercession, more nor for his suffering before the incarnation. But as he is said to be the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, so his blood may be said then to cry; which must be the Intercession there meant by that Author, as may further appear from the following Objection.

3. *Object.* He was our Mediator before the incarnation: He was King, Priest and Prophet; and as a Priest he must have

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 have then his judicial appearances for his people. *Ans.* He was Mediator by virtue of that satisfactory sacrifice he was to offer up for his people: God accepted his bond and set the captive at liberty before the terme of payment came. And he was then King and Prophet, because of that which he was once to do and suffer as a Priest: Neither did it import any thing not befitting his infinite and glorious Majesty to govern his Church as a King, and by his Word and Spirit, as a Prophet, to reveal to them the way to salvation; but he could neither suffer nor interceed (which are the parts of his priestly Office) till he was man. So much for vindication of that judicious Divine, and for clearing what may be objected from him.

But, 3. and more pungently, it may be objected, that the Father saith to the Son before he assumed our nature, *ask of me, and I shall give thee, &c. Psal. 2. 8.* and therefore he must either be disobedient to his Father, or he must ask before he took (m) on him the seed of Abraham. *Ans.* These words are relative to Christs ascending into heaven. O! (saith (n) an eminent practical Divine) *So full of joy was the Fathers heart, that he had his Son in heaven with him Whom he had begotten from everlasting; who was lately dead, and, in a manner lost; and therefore (as it were) new begotten: I know you will ask me now for all you have died for, and this I promise you before hand, before you speak a word and make any request to me, you shall ask nothing but it shall be granted.* Yea, the Apostle, *Act. 13. 33.* applyeth the preceeding words, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* (Which may be made use of as an objection against this interpretation) unto the time of Christs resurrection. For, *by his resurrection from the dead he was declared to be the Son of God with power, Rom. 1. 4.* And in Scripture things are often said to be done when they are manifested and declared to be, according to the rule of the (*) orthodox Fathers against the Arians. Yea, in one and the same verse we have, (as (p) *Rivet* well observeth) both the eternal and natural generation of Christ in these words, *Thou art my Son;* and the temporal manifestation of that which was from eternity,

(m) Heb. 1. 16.

(n) M. Tho. Goodwin, tri.

of saith from Christs intercession, sect. 4.

ch. 8. sic et Hilar. Theoph.

Amioch. Euseb. Ambros.

Chrysost. Ioh. 1. 12.

(o) *Rivet* in loc.

(p) *Rivet* in loc.

(*) *Rivet* in loc.

(*) *Rivet* in loc.

(*) *Rivet* in loc.

(*) *Rivet* in loc.

(*) *Rivet* in loc.

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this day (pointing out the time of his resurrection and ascension) *have I begotten thee.* That is, now is it manifest (to those who have seen and believed the manifold demonstrations of thy divine Power) that thou art my Son whom I have begotten from all eternity, and now thou being risen from the dead and ascended into heaven, ask what thou wilt and it shall be given unto thee.

And as thus the series of the words, and the infallible interpretation of the Apostle, do shew, that this invitation, *to ask*, doth relate to the time of his ascension, and so to the humane nature which only died, rose, and ascended; so also the matter of the petition: For, the beathen Gentiles which there are promised to be given to him upon his asking, were not brought unto Christ till after his incarnation and ministry; yea not (as to any considerable part and number) till after his ascension; and therefore we must either say, that Christ did ask and was not heard, or else that he did not ask till he took on him our nature, and in it did interceed and prevail.

5. *Obj.* Christ was the Angel or Messenger of the covenant before he was man, *Mal.* 3. 1. and *Iosua*, his standing before this Angel while Sathan did stand at his right hand to resist him, *Zech.* 3. 1, 2. doth imply his appearing and pleading for *Iosua*; this was that Angel that was sent before the people of Israel to keep them in their way, *Exod.* 14. 19. and, 23. 20, 21. *Alt.* 7. 38. *1 Cor.* 10. 9. *Heb.* 12. 25, 26. He was that Angel of the Lord that pleaded for *Jerusalem*, *Zech.* 1. 12. He it was that appeared unto *Hagar*, and promised to multiply her seed, *Gen.* 16. 7, 10, 13. He was one of the three (4) Angels, which assuming an humane shape as the other two, did appear unto *Abraham*, and with whom *Abraham* pleaded; *Gen.* 18. Thus we see his condescension and appearing to his *Servants*, yea to *Hagar* that rebellious bond-woman, and did he not then appear for them? *Ans.* we may not now digresse to speak to that school-debate (7) concerning the mission or sending of the persons of the blessed Trinity, their appearing and manifesting themselves, and the appropriation of attributes and actions to each of these

(9) See English Divines
Miles, on the
place

(10) De missione
personarum di-
vinarum &c.

questionibus
anonim. Vide

Bonbard, 2.

font. diss. 24.

15. Scorum in

loc. Thom. 1.

part. quest. 43.

& scholast. ad

hoc imprimis

Banica ibid.

& Becannar

thiel. Scholast.

Part 1. tract.

2. Cap. 9.

these inseparably united persons; only for clearing the present case we would offer some few particulars, 1. When any one of the persons of the glorious Trinity is said to be sent, or to appear to act, speak, or do by any visible symbole or representation, or by a vision, or spirituall manifestation, and that either in a transient way as to the prophets of old, or by an habituall and permanent work, as when the Spirit doth renew the heart after its first pattern. 1. We must not imagine any separation of these essentially united persons, that one can be present where the other two are not; or that one can act and do what the other two doth not; for they have one nature and so the same presence, they have one power and so the same work; and therefore that work and symbole whether sensible or spirituall, whereby one of the persons of the Trinity doth in some particular manner appear and manifest himself, must be the effect and product of all the three, albeit for this end and purpose that it may in some speciall manner and upon some particular account represent, and have a peculiar relation unto some one of those blessed persons, and not to the other two.

Neither, 2. must we imagine, that what is said or done in a (s) vision, or by sensible (t) symbols and representations, is personally and really acted by those glorious persons; but thereby is held forth, 1. that naturall order and distinction of the persons of the Trinity; an order in subsisting and working, but no inequality or subjection of one person to another, *sed ut personarum* (saith (u) Tilen) *fit actionum personalium ordo ac distinctio hoc pacto designatur.* 2. Thereby is signified that (x) appropriation of attributes and works, which is founded upon that naturall order, and doth flow from the voluntary economy and dispensation in their way of acting and conveying the good things in the Gospel-offer to the sons of men.

And thus, 3. What is said of Christ his appearing and being present by some sensible symbole, or of his intercession repre-

(f) *As thus in the objection Zech. 3.*

(t) *As ibat God did speak, walk, &c.*

(u) *Synag. part. 1. Dissp. 22. Sect. 11.*

(x) *Neque per missionem spiritus imperium aliquod servile, ut ipsius persona nullis locorum spatiis circumscripta motus localis, sed ἀνεργῶν duntaxat extraordinaria effecta, aut peculiare aliquod presentia ipsius symbolum intelligendum est: Tilen.*

ibid. Sect. 10.

aliud est sua natura, aliud Omnipotencia voluntaria

dissp. 22. Sect. 27. Sed qua

subiecti deobediencia & bonore Patri &

Christo exhibi-

to, intelligenda sunt de natura humana,

quamvis faciendum sit

non ut eas dispensatione gloriam suam ad tempus oculis, nunquam tamen abdicasse, vel abici dedit: (x) of which appropriation we purpose to speak at some greater length, part. 3. Chap. 1.

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sented to the prophets in some vision, doth not import that for that time he did personally appear, and did then interceed for his people, but that according to that eternall transaction and covenant amongst the persons of the Trinity, he was in time to take on him our nature, and in it really to act what then was represented: and thus even then he was the Angel of the Covenant by vertue of that eternal transaction; and accordingly his dispensations did, from time to time, answer, and in some manner represent that paction and agreement, and adumbrat what, in due time, he would personally do and suffer for the Elect; as his appearing, conducting and comforting the ancient people by some sensible signes of his presence, untill the (7) fulness of time came, and then he appeared in our nature personally united to the divine, and in it did really perform what had been formerly only shadowed forth and typified: then he did execute the office of a Priest in all it's parts, offering up himself in a sacrifice on earth, and then ascending into heaven there to appear and interceed for us for ever: And thus we grant that Christ did typically and symbolically interceed and appear under the Old Testament, though not properly and personally. So much for discovering the first rock.

(7) Gal. 4. 4.

(2) Thom.
Goodwin, 17.
of faith from
Christ's Inter-
cession.

As for the second, the judicious (2) Mr. Goodwin seemeth to ascribe too much to Christ's intercession, as it is contrarie distinguished from his sacrifice: we will only offer these few particulars from that elaborat Treatise of the triumph of faith from Christ's intercession.

1. *This was (saith he) so necessary a part of his priesthood, that without it he had not been a compleat Priest: for, he had then left his Office imperfect, and had done it but by halves, seeing the other part of it, the work of intercession, lay still upon him to be acted in heaven.* sect. 5. chap. 2. pag.

(2) Edit. ond.
an. 1661.

(a) (mihi) 71.

2. *Yea, this part of his priesthood is, of the two, the more eminent yea, the top, the height of his priesthood,* ibid. pag. 79.

3. *Yea, all his priesthood would have been ineffectual if he had not acted the part of a Priest in heaven by intercession; for, by his death he did but begin the execution of his Office, in*
heaven

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4. *Yea, so prevalent of its self it is, that we might build upon it alone, even as much as upon his death. ibid. chap. 5. pag. 100.*

5. *The whole application of his redemption, both in justifying and saving us first and last, hath a special dependance upon this his intercession; this all Divines do attribute unto it, calling his death medium impetrationis; that is, the means of procurement and obtaining it for us: But his intercession medium applicationis, the means of applying all to us. Christ purchaseth salvation to us by the one, but possesseth us of it by the other; the end of his death is adeptio juris, purchasing a right unto salvation; but of intercession procuratio ipsius salutis, the very saving us actually and putting us in possession of heaven. ibid. chap. 3. pag. 85. and chap. 4. pag. 93.*

6. *Although his being a Surety holds true of all parts of his office; yet it doth in a more special way refer unto his intercession, ibid. pag. 96.*

There be some other expressions to the same purpose here and there intermixed all alongst that Treatise; but, these are the most material on which he most insisteth. We do not condemn, but most heartily comply with, this great Divine in his design, which was to demonstrat the prevalency of Christs intercession, and to hold that out as a sweet cordial to believers in all their fainting fits, and a soveraign *Catholicon* to which they may recure for removing and preventing every distemper they are subject to. O! for a heart to prize, and a tongue to expresse that mystery of love, care and tenderness of our glorified Redeemer towards his poor servants, wrestling with many tryals and difficulties in this their pilgrimage. O! what bowels of sympathy and compassion are discovered by his continual intercession for us; and all the texts cited by this Author, and the several reasons drawn from thence, do only prove, 1. That Christ doeth truly and properly interceed for us, that his intercession is distinct from his oblation and sacrifice. 2. That his intercession must prevail, that the Father can deny him nothing.

And

And therefore we shall not need to make a particular answer to the several mis-applications of these Scriptures, for making out what they do not bear. The intelligent reader may, at the first view, discern this to be the scope they aim at, and that they cannot reach the length to which they are drawn by this accurate Disputer. We shall only then in a word propound some few considerations, which may help to discover the fallacy of his inferences.

1. Albeit there be so many grounds and reasons for the success and prevalency of Christs intercession, yet all of them suppose his suffering and satisfying the justice of God, without which there was an *(b)* impossibility lying in the way of the salvation and acceptance of sinners. Christ, as our Surety, could not plead and interceed for us till he had paid a price sufficient; till the bond was cancelled, he could not plead for the liberty of the captive. Hence,

2. To say that we may build upon his intercession alone, seemeth to be directly contrary to that word; *Heb. 9. 22. without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.* We will not enquire what the Lord, out of his sovereignty, might have done, or whether or no he in his infinit wisdom (which is a depth we cannot fathom) could have found out another way: but, supposing the eternal appointment to save lost man by a Mediator, I cannot see how our Surety could interpose upon another account than the satisfaction of justice, or, how justice should be satisfied, and that just threatening accomplished, *In the day thou eatest thou shalt die, Gen. 2. 7.* If

Adam must not *(c)* die either legally or personally, either he or his Surety in his room; and therefore we will find our redemption and salvation so frequently ascribed to his death and blood, that we need not name any one place; amongst many, only look on these few, *Act. 20. 28. Rom. 3. 25. and 5. 9. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14, 20. Heb. 10. 19. 1 Pet. 1. 2. 1 Joh. 1. 7. Rev. 1. 5. and 5. 9. &c.* But I know not any one place in which our redemption is ascribed to his intercession; though it be a most effectual mean for conveying and putting us in possession of these blessings which he hath purchased to us by his death.

(b) Whether this impossibility was moral only and hypothetical, or, absolute and physical, flowing from the nature of God, his justice, holiness, &c. we will not now dispute.

(c) Both the first and second death, and especially the last, as the most proper wages of sin, must be here meant.

Yea, 2. To affirm that his intercession alone is sufficient, is to make (though I know this Author will abominat such an (e) assertion) Christ to have died in vain. Was Christ so prodigal of his precious blood as to lavish it out for that which some few words might have effectuated? We must not then rob him of the honour of his death, that thereby we may extoll him in his *intercession*.

And then, 3. If he were not a compleat Priest without it, the condition of believers under the old Testament must have been most sad and deplorable; and the popish *Limbus patrum*, that Prison, not heard of till many years after the captives had made their escape, must have been a desirable paradise to them who had not a compleat Priest, to go between them and the devouring flames, and to (f) tread the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of the Almighty God. And as for the time of their misery, the popish Doctors must have hit right; for, since he did not appear in heaven to interceed for us till he ascended, and if he was not a compleat Priest without this *intercession*, the time of his ascension must be the (g) day of their liberty, and enjoying that happiness which was suspended till then.

3. We do not deny that Christs *intercession* is *medium applicationis*, a most effectual and always prevailing mean for obtaining to us, and putting us in possession of all the good things he hath purchased for us by his blood; but yet, without this believers were saved of old, and he was a compleat Priest able to make their peace and reconciliation: and therefore, though his *intercession* be most comfortable to us, yet, it is not of such absolute necessity, that without it his blood would have been shed in vain; the judge of the whole earth could not deal unjustly, he would not have kept the captives in prison after their (h) ransom was paid; although he who laid down the money had not taken upon him the person of an Advocat to plead; and of an Intercessor to request, that justice might be done to him: but yet, it is very comfortable

(c) Though it may be drawn as a conclusion from the premisses he laish down.

(f) Rev. 19. 15

(g) And thus the popish Doctors must only have misreckoned some few dayes, they ascribing this liberty to Christs descending (as they suppose) to bell, which was not obtained till his ascension into heaven.

(h) Though Christ by his blood that was to be shed, and satisfaction be had undertaken to make, might well purchase and procure the salvation of believers under the old Testament; yes, he cannot be said to have interceded for them who were saved before he

assumed our nature and was in a capacity to interceed. Intercession cannot have a thing already done and past for its object.

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that our Surety doth alwayes appear for us before the Throne; and that he liveth for ever to make intercession.

4. We cannot go alongst with this learned Author while he saith, that Christ was not a common person representing others in this his last work of *intercession*, more nor in the first of *incarnation*, *ibid. chap. 4. pag. 97.* For, if he interceed for us as our Surety, Mediator, &c. (which he grants) then certainly as a common and publick person. Neither do I see any solid reason why we may be said to die, rise and ascend with him, (which he affirmeth) and not also to interceed with him: It is true, there is some peculiar reason why in his death, in some special manner, he may be said to stand under the relation of our Surety, and so of a publick person; because thereby he paid our debt and satisfied divine justice, which we had wronged: but as to the other particulars he instanceth, I can see no difference between them and his Intercession, as to the present case; and the difference he alledgeth is nought: For, (saith he) *this last work*, viz. of *Intercession*, lay not upon us to do. What, is it not our duty to interceed and pray for our selves? but of this enough. Only I think it somewhat strange, that this Author knowing the point of Christs proper and (i) formal Intercession, to be so problematically spoken of by eminent Divines, (though I see no reason why it should be questioned) should notwithstanding make it so necessary a part of his Priesthood, that without it he had not been a compleat Priest, &c.

But, let none imagine, that by this our endeavour to vindicat the sufficiency and efficacy of Christs death, (that compleat ransom for our sins, abstracting from all other grounds of faith and consolation, which our compassionate Saviour, out of his tender bowels, hath been pleased to super-add, that our joy may be full and stable) we did purpose to call in question the truth, or to diminish the worth and prevalence of Christs Intercession; which is such a sufficient abundary (as that (k) Author speaketh) of consolation to poor believers, a (l) daily preservative and continual plaister to heal all their sins. Oh! let us abominate such a cursed designe, and thankfully prize and improve this great priviledge, that we

(i) *Viz. As it is distinct from the cry of his blood.*

(k) *Ibid. cb. 9. pag. 124.*

(l) *Ibid. cb. 5. pag. 89.*

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we have such a noble Advocat and Intercessor appearing in heaven for us. O let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, *Heb. 4. 16.*

Having premised these things for guarding against extremes, and for discovering, 1. That the Jews enjoyed not the privilege of Christs intercession. 2. Yet, notwithstanding they wanted nothing absolutely necessary for their salvation and happiness; we come now to give a positive and direct answer to the question, viz. That the believing Jews were under the same covenant of grace which we are under, that they had the same promises, the same crown proposed to them, and the same way to life and felicity; so that they wanted nothing essentially requisite to their happiness; for as now there is not, so neither was there then any other name given among men whereby they must be saved but the name of *Jesus Christ*; neither now is there, or ever was there salvation to be found any other way, *Act. 4. 12.* He is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, *Rev. 83. 8.* Jesus Christ the same yesterday and to day and for ever, *Heb. 13. 8.* He is the Lord which is, which was, and which is to come, *Rev. 1. 8.* God was (saith the Apostle speaking of the time past, and of the Jewish Church, *2 Cor. 5. 19*) in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. The promise then was made and ordained in the hand of a (m) Mediator; *Gal. 3. 19.* Yea in some sense they had the benefit of his intercession; for he being then slain in the irrevocable and infallible decree and fore-knowledge of God, his blood then, though not actually shed, did cry, and as properly as *Abels* after it was shed: but this (as hath been shown) was no proper intercession, and rather the cry of the sacrifice then of the Priest. But, 2. Though Christ was a complete Priest and Saviour of the Jews, yet great, and many are the privileges of the Christian Church beyond the Jewish, in which respect judicious Interpreters do think that the least in the kingdom of heaven (that is to say they, under the full discovery of the Gospel mysteries) is said to be greater then he who was one of the greatest of them that were born of women, *Mat. 11. 11.*

(m) This Mediator was not Moses as some think, but he who was that rock that followed the Israelites in the wilderness, *1 Cor. 10. 4.* vid. Calv. in locum, albeit we dissent not from *Vindict* who will have this spoken of Moses as a type of Christ, for that glasse comes down to our point.

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(n) *M. Goodwin loc. cit. Ch. 3. pag. 88.*

(o) *Gen. 9. 13. 15.*

(p) *Pf 78. 38.*

(q) *Deut. 33. 29.*

(r) *For these Chapters, viz. the 14. 15. 16. 17. hold out a continued discourse.*

(t) *This is not Gerhards interpretation αὐτοῦ ἐξ ἡμῶν but may be collected from his words.*

(v) *This is rather an extension, fruit and effect of the love of election, then a new love or new act of Gods will; for how can it be called new to him according to whose eternall purpose and appointment is someth to pass all the change when is in the Object and in Gods work, and no way in the immutable will of God.*

(u) *Cajet. in loc.*

and *Heb. 7. 22.* Christ is said to be made a Surety of a better Testament, and *Heb. 8. 6.* to be the Mediator of a better Covenant: and upon this speciall account, and by way of excellency κατ' ἐξοχήν he is called the Mediator of the new Testament, *Heb. 9. 15.* and *12. 24.* And that not only because Gospel ordinances, are now more clear, full and spirituall, but also because of Christs ascension into heaven, his appearing there in our name as Gods remembrancer for us, and (as (n) one speaketh) the rainbow about the throne, that when the Lord looks on it, he may (o) remember (though he cannot forget) his Covenant, and (p) turn away his anger, and not stir up all his wrath; that our high Priest having taken on him our nature, is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and therefore maketh continuall intercession for us. (q) Happy was thou, *O Israel*: what Nation was like unto thee who hadst such a Saviour; but more happy are we who have this Saviour now appearing in Heaven for us, and pleading our cause.

Obj. Christ told his Disciples, *Joh. 16. 26.* That he would not pray for them. And if he would not pray for his Disciples, for whom will he pray? *Ans.* Such a glosse is directly contrary to his promise, *Ch. 14. 16.* And to his practice, *Ch. 17.* And were it not blasphemous once to imagine, that our blessed Lord would thus at (r) one breath so palpably contradict himself? As for the sense of these words, *Joh. 16. 26.* Some with (s) *Gerhard* do answer, That Christ doth not simply deny that he will pray for his Disciples, but only in some respect; he would not pray for them as enemies, and strangers. 2. As to some particular petition, he will not now pray for their reconciliation, and the acceptance of their persons, they being already in the state of grace. And, 3. as to some particular end, that they may be beloved of the Father, since the Father already loved them, not only, 1. with that eternal love of Election; but (t) also, with the, 2. love of actual reconciliation, and, 3. complacency in them. 2. (u) *Cajetan* *Ans.* That Christ doth not deny, that he will pray for them, but he suppresseth that, (having already promised it) and would not now mention it, but would speak to another ground of their consolation, viz. the Fathers love.

3. (x) M. Goodwin Ans. [that these words are the highest intimation that can be, that he will and doth pray for us: when men would most strongly intimat their purpose of kinde-nesse they mean to do for one, they use to say, I do not say that I love you, or that I will do this or that for you, which is as much as to say I will surely do it, and do it to purpose.]

(x) M. Goodwin loc. cit. Ch. 9. pag. 119.

We will not stay to multiply (y) interpretations; But that with which we close (albeit these we have brought may also serve for clearing the words) is that of the learned Tolet, [I do not say I will pray, that is, (saith he) I need not to pray for you, not that I will not pray, but that my formall intercession is not necessary, for the love of the Father is such to you, and my death and satisfaction such a real pleasing Sacrifice, that he will refuse you nothing ye will ask in my name, ye must not think that my intercession is of such absolut necessity as my suffering] Which interpretation, as it seemeth to be most agreeable to the scope of the words, and for clearing what hath been lately said by (a) us; so also with the like phrase upon a contrary occasion, *Joh. 5. 45: Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father* (b) that is, I shall not need to do it, *Moses* and his Law will be enough to condemne you, and though ye had never heard of me, his writings will sufficiently serve for your damnation; and yet elsewhere he tells them, that this shall be their condemnation, that light is come into the world, and that if he had not spoken unto them they had had no sin, (*viz.* in comparision of their aggravated guiltinesse) and that upon this account it shall be more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* at the day of judgement then for them, *Joh. 3. 19.* and *15. 22. Mat. 11. 22.* So that not only *Moses* and his writings, but also Christ and his Gospel shall accuse them; So, though I did not pray (saith he) yet you would no lesse then your Fathers who lived before my incarnation come speed, though for your greater comfort, I will also intercede for you.

(y) Which to the number of 13, ye may read in Gerhard. cont. Harm. Evan. Cap. 179. pag. 1127.

(z) Toletus in loc. non dico vobis necesse esse e. vid. loc

(a) In opposition to M. Goodwin.

(b) ubi non simpliciter negat sed tantum significat, non esse opus Gerhard. ubi supra

But you will say, what grounds of consolation can Christs intercession afford to us, since while he prayed for himself he was not heard? He thrice prayed that the cup of his sufferings might

(c) Rev. 19.

15.

(d) Apud
Forb. inst. bist.

thes. lib. 5.

Cap. 29. S.

10, 11.

(e) Damasc.

lib. 4. Ortha-

dox. fid. Cap.

19.

(f) Thom. 3.

pars. quest. 18.

art. 5.

(g) Vid Thom.

1 pars. quest.

79. art. 9. &

1. 2. quest. 74.

art. 7.

(h) Thom. 3.

pars quest. 2 I.

art. 4.

(i) Thom.

ibid. talis vo-

luntas magis

ascenda est vel-

leitas quam

absoluta volun-

tas, quia scilicet

homo hoc vellet

si aliud non

obstiteret.

(k) Tolet in

Joan. cap.

12. 27.

(l) Non sim-

pliciter sed se-

cundum quid.

Thom. 3. pars

quest. 11. art.

4. secundum

portionem in-

feriorem no-

luit passionem voluntate ut natura & ut libera, noluit tantum conditionaliter non absolute

Scot. in 2. sent. dist. 15. quest. unica. Aliud est aliquid velle ex hypotesi, aliud vero simpli-

citer velle, Camer. resp. ad epist. pag. 768.

might passe from him; yet notwithstanding, he was made to (c) tread the Wine-presse of the fiercenesse and wrath of almighty God. *Ans.* 1. It were lost travell to stay to confute (d) *Sergius*, *Honorius* and other Monothelits their hereticall glosse, who affirm that Christ had no more a humane and naturall will then he had sin, but that he did speak these words in our room and name. 2. (e) *Damascen* (the papists great Patriarch) is no lesse ridiculous in his conceit, while he affirms that Christ did not truly and properly pray, but only in appearance, shew and resemblance. 3. Therefore let us a little view what these who are more solid and judicious have offered for clearing the place.

And we will begin with *Aquinas* his distinctions. And thus, 1. Christ (f) (saith he) did will the removing of the cup of his sufferings with a natural and sensitive will, not with a rational will, for thus he did choose it, and thirst after it. 2. If with a rational will (since it were absurd to say that his will had no reason) yet as led and directed by (g) *inferior reason*, which pondereth only humane and sensible motives, and not by *superior reason*, which perpendeth spiritual and divine considerations.

3. Christ did (h) will the cup to passe from him according to some natural and indeliberat motion, arising from the sensual appetite, but according to his will led by deliberat reason, he submits and saith, *not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

4. Christ (i) willed the removal of that bitter cup with an ineffectuall (*velleity*) not with a positive and proper will, it was rather a *wishing* and *woulding* (*viz.* if the condition were feasible) then a true *willing* for the present.

5. Christ (k) willed that cup to passe, not absolutely and peremptorily, but only conditionally, and upon supposition, if thus God could be honoured, and man saved; he willed not upon any (l) termes, and all things being considered, but only in some respect.

But (m) *Mat. Begun* taketh another way for clearing the difficulty [It is (saith he) *one thing to pray, another thing to propound a simple and ineffectuall desire, thus Christ did not pray while he said, let this cup passe from me, but did express his natural desire, which he did restrain while he subjoynd not as I will, but as thou wilt*] And he gives three reasons for this interpretation: 1. Because we may not offer up our indeliberat and in-efficacious desires to God prayer-ways, but we must perpend what we ask, and ponder our words; we must not take things as they appear at the first view, but we must consider them as circumstantiated, and as relative to that end for which they are appointed of God. 2. We must pray in faith and confidence to be heard; but, such a desire could not be put up in faith: For, Christ knew that he was to drink that cup, and therefore he knew as well that his desire was not to be granted, As he who said, *O mihi preteritis referat si Jupiter annos*. 3. If Christ did pray that the cup might passe from him, he must at once pray for both parts of the contradiction; for, he presently addeth, *not my will, to have this cup passe, but thine, that I may drink it, be done*: and then he concludeth thus, *Transcat à me calix iste, non fuit oratio, sed explicatio naturalis affectus quo Christi humanitas abhorrebat à morte*.

(m) *Began*
theol. (ed part.
3. tom. 2. cap.
17. quest. 3.

To which may be added a fourth reason, such a desire as is contrary, 1. to promise, covenant and transaction. 2. To office and calling. 3. To the glory of God's truth and mercy expressed in the Word. 4. To prophecies of old, and the then more fully revealed Doctrine of the Gospel. And, 5. To the salvation of man; could not be put up prayer-ways to God by our faithfull high Priest and compassionat Saviour; But that desire to have the cup of his sufferings to passe from him, had been thus contrary to, &c.

(n) *Its antiebrew manner of Speech, expressing his earnest and longing desire to fulfill the will of his Father, &c. English Divines on the place: Nam qui vult antecedens, vult etiam consequens.*

5. Christ did most earnestly thirst after this cup. With (n) desire he desired it, *Luke 22. 15*. He was, as it were, straitened and pained till he drank it, such a longing desire had he after it, *Luke 12. 50*. And how resolutely doth he encounter and meet it, *Mat. 26. 46. John 18. 4*. And would he then pray contrary to the desire of his own heart, and thus act contrary to what he prayed for?

6. What-

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(o) Luke 24.
16.

6. Whatever men who know not the mind of God, nor what is good and expedient, *hic & nunc*, may do or pray in reference to their sufferings; yet, to say, that our blessed Lord, who knew that he must (o) suffer and then enter into his glory, would pray against his suffering, is not very probable.

7. Will any wise man ask a thing upon a condition that he knoweth to be impossible? and is it not all one as to ask a thing that is in it self impossible? It were no lesse ridiculous to desire that we might flee if we had wings, then to desire wings whereby we may flee. And if any man, to shew his affection to such a thing, did make use of such words as might import a present desire; yet, there is none but would allow to him so much candor, as to interpret his words as expressing what he would do, (*viz.* if the condition were placed or possible at least) and would not think him to be so foolish as to ask upon a condition he knows to be impossible.

(p) Non ful-
se in Christo
contrarieta-
tem volunta-
tum conatur
Thom. ostend-
dere 3. parti.
quæst. 18. arti.
6. sed ratio
quam adfert
trivola est, jux-
ta eam enim se-
quitur non esse
contrarietatem
voluntatum in
nobis; rectius
Dionys. Car-
thus. hunc no-
dum solvit in
3. sens. dist. 17.
quæst. 1. quem
vide.

Yea, 8. Supposing that both these (p) desires were ex-pressed by way of prayer and petition; yet, it may appear from what we are to say, *part 4.* concerning the sense of conditional petitions, that Christ did truly and properly desire that he might drink that cup, and that he did not either desire or pray that that cup might passe from him: and thus we may conceive the meaning of the words to be this, [*O, Father, if it were possible, (if it might stand with thy glory and the sal- vation of man, for he is not speaking in reference to Gods power, or of the possibility of the thing simply considered) I would desire to be freed from this cup, which innocent nature, according to it's innate propension and sinless appetite after self-being and preservation, so much abhorreth, and must needs abominat: But yet, since I know that it is not thus possible, but that thy glory, in the salvation of man, doth call for my suffering, this is it that I do desire and do pray for, that thy Will may be done, and that I may drink this bitter cup*] And can we imagine that the thoughts and desires of Christs heart were not the same then which they were a little after? *Ioh. 18. 11.* O! How pathetically there doth he reject such a desire? For, saith he, *the cup which my Father, hath given me, shall I not drink it?* And how doth he
abominat

abominat such a desire flowing from Peter? and how smartly doth he take him up? *Get thee behind me, Satan, Mat. 16. 22, 23.* And can we think that Christ would harbour such a (n) desire in himself, and offer it up in prayer, which in Peter he calleth Sathans motion? But, you will say, doth not Christ in his prayer propound this desire? *Ans.* Every thing spoken in Prayer is not askt; neither doth it belong to the matter and object of petition, but may be brought by way of narration, meditation, motive, &c.

9. What if it were said, that the first words of this prayer (as that of the afflicted, *Ps. 102.* from v. 3. to 12.) do rather contain a complaint than a petition? as if he had said, [*O Father, how doth nature abhor this cup? and if I would give way to it's complaints, and did not reflect on the glorious ends of my suffering, I could not but desire that this cup might pass from me; but, I will not entertain such a motion; for, I heartily acquiesce in thy Will and holy appointments; and this is it that I do indeed desire and pray for, that thy Will may be done.*]

10. But, we have too long digressed in speaking to the matter of this prayer by way of enquiry; (for, we purpose not, we need not now pre-emptorily determine) let us only add some two or three words. 1. Some may perhaps think, that Christ, looking upon his sufferings in themselves, and abstractively without reference to the end, he could not but (o) abhor them; and why might he not give way to such an apprehension, that the bitterness thereof might be a part of his suffering? and thus put up a conditional prayer against them; not that absolutely, all things being considered; or relatively, as they were a mean to such a glorious end, he did not desire them: but merely to shew the reality and greatness of his sufferings in themselves, and to leave an (p) example to us how we should carry under our tryals, viz. that though we may be sensible of them, and may complain of

(n) Molulus in Joh. 12. 27. Petitionem carnis Domini ipsa confestim corrigis, servato me ex hac hora, est vox carnis, non spiritus. Calvin. in loc. dicit, Christum votum illud subito sibi sublapsum, statim corrigere & castigare. Nolo cum Bellarm. hac verba nimium exagitate, modus tamen loquendi mihi non placeat, quamvis Patres phar-macum adhibeat diffingendo inter correctionem Logicam, Ethicam, & Rhetoricam, vid. Par. in Mat. 26. & Udalricum apud Dion. Carthus. loc. cit. ubi etiam de Delano & Sualno Christi.

in naturalibus non deliberativa, & dici poterit Delano non Sualno, vid. hanc diff. apud Tho. 3. pars. quest. 181. art. 3. (p) Ratio qua petitionem proposuit volebat ut hoc impleretur, sed ad instructionem nostram volebat demonstrare nobis suam voluntatem naturalem, & motum sensualitatis quem sicut homo habebat, Thom. 3. pars. quest. 21. art. 3. ad 1.

(q) Not only to be an evidence that he was sent of God, and did that miracle in his strength: but also to reach the Apostles to praise God when he wrought any miracle by them.

(r) Gerhardus de pass. cap. 2. pag.

(mibi) 107, Christi voluntas vel reseruat circa se, vel supra se, &c.

(t) Calv. in Heb. 5. 7.

Vid. conjecturam Hilarii apud Lombard, 3. sent.

dist. 17. & Thom. 3. part.

quæst. 21. art. 4. ad 1. Origenis, Ambrosii Hieron.

& Basilii apud Gerhard, de pass.

cap. 2.

(s) Quod voluit obtinere

ut à mortis doloribus victor emergeret, Calv. in Heb. 5. 7.

Sim & iulianus ex suo meo

Calvin. pro sua pietate Castellan. pro reprobis in Basili.

See Calvin and Beza their interpretation defended against the Rhemists, by Dr. Fulk on the place; ex meo (ait Beza in loc.) fuisse confirmatum ut omnem pavorem mortis deposuerit, vid. loc. (u) Neque solum dict potest filius à Patre non tantum exaudiri ut qui liberationem à morte non nisi addita conditione petierit, Beza ibid.

them; yet, with submission and a perfect resignation of our selves to Gods will and disposing: especially since it is certain, that Christ did many things for to be our copy and example. Thus he did (q) praise God, Job. 11. 41, 42. and why might he not also upon this account here pray to God?

2. (saith (r) Gerhard) Christs will did neither look to what was about him, viz. the wrath of an angry Judge, his bitter sufferings, &c. And thus he desireth, that the cup might passe from him; Or, 2. He did look to the counsel of his Father and the fruit of his sufferings, and thus he submitteth.

3. Others may think that Christ did not simply deprecate the cup; but that it might quickly passe; *ut post breve certamen* (as (s) Calvin speaketh) *triumphum ageret.*

4. Some may conceive, that by the cup he did not understand the cup of his bodily and sensible sufferings, but the spiritual cup of desertion; of which also he complained on the crosse, while he cried out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* and though he did not simply pray against all soul-trouble, as knowing that to be a necessary part of our ransome; yet, might he not pray against the extremity of it? and that some measure and degree of it might be withheld? &c.

But whatever was the object of Christs prayer, we need not doubt of its acceptance and success; *I know thou alwayes hearest me*, Job. 11. 42. And the Apostle, speaking indefinitely of the prayers which he offered up in the dayes of his flesh, but more especially of his prayers in the time of his suffering, testifieth that he was (s) heard, there was none of his prayers that were rejected, Heb. 5. 7.

2. There is none can imagine that Christ did (u) absolutely pray that that cup might passe from him, and the condition (v) (upon which he may be said to have askt) not being placed,

he cannot be said to be refused, since he only upon that condition did ask.

(x) See this distinction (though applied to another purpose) brought by Doctor Twisse against Arminius vind. lib. 1, part. 2. c. 6. 23. page. 230 and as length prosecuted against Corvin. digr. 7. pag. 237. alia est oratio iustitiae à Christo ex officio hominis privati, alia ex officio Mediatoris, &c.

(y) Thom. 3. part. quæst. 22. art. 4. ad 2. Dominus oravit pro his solum qui erant prædestinati. Non oravit Christus promissus pro omnibus &c. Gal. in loc.

(z) Thus such a supposition is not improbable shall appear Ch. 7. Sect. 3. (a) Hieron. lib. de scriptur. ecclesiast.

(b) Quas etas ex sequitur. Becan. loc. cit. quæst. 4.

And, 3. If these words, *let this cup passe*, contain a prayer, yet, it is none of his (x) mediatory prayers put up for his ransomed ones: and therefore, though we did suppose that Christ was not heard in that which he asked, 1. Conditionally. 2. For himself. Yet, there were no ground to fear that what he asketh absolutely and to others by vertue of his own purchase, that he will, or can, be refused.

You will say, did not Christ thus pray for them who crucified him? *Luk. 23. 34.* He prayed that the Father would forgive them, and yet how few of them were pardoned and converted? *Ans.* 1. with (y) Thomas, that Christ did not pray for all those who had a hand in his death, but only for the Elect amongst them. 2. Though we would (z) suppose that our blessed Lord while he was breathing out his last words did put up a Prayer for his cruell enemies, yet it will not follow that he can be denied any thing which as Mediator he asks for his people, for whom he shed his blood. Its certain Christ did many things for our example, and to be a pattern for us, and if thus he prayed for all his persecutors that prayer was not *Mediatory* but *exemplar*; and that Christ in his suffering did so carry as to leave us an example, the Apostle testifieth, *1 Pet. 2. 21.* He then *left us an example that we should follow his steps.* And accordingly the saints have looked on this copy, *Stephen Act. 7. 60.* and *James* the brother of our Lord; who (as (a) Jerom witnesseth) when he was cast from the pinnacle of the temple did pray for pardon to the murderers, saying, *Lord, forgive them for they know not what they do.*

We will not multiply trifling objections; but that which seemeth mainly to prevail with some (b) Schoolmen is, because that all power in heaven and in earth is given unto him, *Mat. 28. ult. 18.* Wherefore should he then in the exercise of that power run to the Father, and by prayer ask, as it were, a new licence? There is no man who of himself may not *usi suâ potestate*, use the power that is put in his hands: Hence they conclude that Christ doth not truly, ex-

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pressly and properly pray, but only improperly, and in some sense [*virtualiter & interpretatiuè*] *Ans.* The Lord doth not so give, and communicate power and authority to any creature, yea not to the man Christ Jesus, as one creature giveth to another, for he still retaineth, and keeps his own propriety and right; and must therefore be acknowledged to be the principal owner and Lord; and therefore it cannot derogate from Christs gift, that in the exercise of his power, he, by prayer and intercession, acknowledge his dependance on the Father; and why may he not observe the same method in governing, whereby he came to, and was put in possession of the government? Though he was a son and heir, yet he must ask a possession, *Pf. 2. ver. 7, 8*, Why may not he who did ask before he got, also ask before he give and let out? and that it is so, he hath once and again told us for our comfort; and this objection cannot prove the contrary, but rather holds out a notable ground of encouragement to all those who run unto this our faithful and mercifull high Priest, who ever liveth to make intercession; that since he hath such moyen in heaven, since all power is put in his hands, therefore will nothing be denyed to him, nor to them who ask in his name, according to that sweet and ample promise, *Joh. 14. 13, 14. &c.*

So much for the first branch of this Section. As to the other: It were a conceit too ridiculous, if any would collect from these figurative invitations to the heavens and earth to praise God, that they were capable of such an exercise, that they could praise God, or call upon him; but there are one or two of these grounds for such expressions, when they occur in the Scriptures.

1. The heavens and earth with all their furniture, may be said to declare the glory of God, be cause the beholding and contemplating of them may, and should be an occasion, inviting and exciting man to his duty to admire and proclaim the power, wisdom and glory of their maker; and thus *objectively* and *occasionally*, these inanimate creatures may be said to praise God,

2. Because that order, beauty perfection which they have (c)

kept

(c) O quot
fines surdi qui
non audiunt
vocem, quam
insensibilia
elementa au-
diuerunt; au-
ditis sol, &
obscuratus est;
lapis, & di-
scipulus est; terra,
& tremuit;
& peccator, &
non com-
punctus est. Ger-
hard herm. de
ps. cap. 14. pag.
(mibi) 660.

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kept unto this day (not having as yet lost their first Lustre they had when they came from the presse) may shame degenerate man, and cast him in the dust to confess, that any of these base creatures, which God hath put under his feet, if it were capable of reason and to converse with God, would be more fit to draw nigh to him and be employed in such an heavenly employment then sinful men, who have lost Gods image and all their native beauty and ornaments; who have so exceedingly polluted themselves, and who take such pleasure to wallow in the mire, and who dare rebell against their Maker, to whom the senselesse creatures have alwaies been obedient.

3. Since God, out of his generall bounty, and as the great Lord of heaven and earth, doth provide for all their Host, and doth answer and satisfie the natural appetite of inanimate creatures, and the sensitive desire of the brutes; these may be said in their own way, and according to their capacity to call upon God, viz. 1. By the voice of subordination and subjection unto, and dependance upon, him. 2. By the voice of natural exigence, and of want and indigence: Thus, Ps. 104. 27. and 145. 15. the eyes of all things are said to wait upon him, that he may give them their meat in due season; and ver. 21. the Lyons particularly are named, and those unruly proud beasts are said to stoop, and seek their meat from him; and then ver. 10. all his works are said to praise him, who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works.

4. Such a glorious employment may be ascribed to these creatures not absolutely, but hypothetically, and by way of supposition; not that they are capable of such an exercise, but if they could, if they were fit to be thus employed, its their duty to which they are infinitely engaged, and it would be their happiness to be thus exercised; though we Alas! who have the honour to be called to such a glorious work, do undervalue, and slight this great privilege.

Sect. 2.

Who once were, but now are not capable of, nor called to offer up this spiritual Sacrifice ?

whether the Angels and Saints in glory do pray ; and whether the devils and damned, may pray and call upon God ?

(a) 1 Pet. 3.
19.

(b) Heb. 12.
29.

(c) Heb. 12.
23.

(d) 1 Cor. 9.
25.

That Angels and Men while *viators*, and before they were stated into an unalterable condition, might have offered up their desires to God, and so were capable of, and fit to be employed in this spirituall exercise, will nor, I think, be denied by any ; and it is no less certain that devils, and the (a) spirits in prison, the souls of the damned now in torment dare not, they may not now look up to God, they dare not now draw nigh to him who is a (b) *consuming fire* to them, they will not worship him and present their supplications to him, and though they were able and willing, it were to no purpose, God would not accept of them who have let the acceptable time pass away : It is to no purpose to supplicate the Judge after the sentence is pronounced.

But it is more dubious whether or not good Angels, and the (c) spirits of just men made perfect do pray, that there is no unfitness in the thing, is granted on all hands ; but the question is, whether now *de facto*, they are thus employed, or if all their work be to behold, enjoy, admire and praise him who hath put an incorruptible (d) crown upon their heads. 2. If the Church triumphant doth in the general pray for the Church militant, that God would preserve them from the rage, and malice of devils and men. that he would comfort, and strengthen them under all their trials and temptations. 3. If also in particular, such and such Saints, do pray for such and such mercies, to such and such particular persons.

As for the two first branches of the question, orthodox
Divines

Divines do not deny, that the Angels and Saints in glory do, 1. pray, and 2. in the general, offer up their desires for their brethren, while they are standing in the open field exposed to the violence of so many and potent enemies, that the Lord would pity, uphold and strengthen them; albeit they call to Papists for some evidence from Scripture, before they determine that as a point of faith and indubitable truth. Hence the learned (e) *Chamier* doth bring all the arguments alledged by Papists unto the triall, and hath discovered their weakness; yet not denying, but on the contrary granting that there is much (f) probability in the thing; only he doth (g) deny that the Saints in glory do know our particular exigences and straits, and that peculiarly they pray for such and such mercies to such and such persons: But of this more when we come to speak against our invoking of, and praying unto them.

(e) Dan. Chamier
pass. rom. 2.
lib. 8. cap.

3. 4.

(f) P. Martyr grants that they desire the good of the Elect: but he doubts if they offer up these desires prayer-ways to God.

Quamquam ego facile admisso sanctos in patriâ votis ardentissimis salutem electorum optare, non tamen ausim dicere eos pro illis orare, perfectionem cum scriptura id nunquam doceat.
loc. com. ch. 3.
loc. 13. sect. 16.

(g) Cham.
loc. cit. cap. 3.
637, 8.

(h) Tho. 2. 2. quest. 83. art. 1. ad 1. quæstus in patriâ nihil deest beatitudinis nisi gloria corporis pro qua orant;

But it may be askt, whether the souls in glory do now pray for any thing to themselves? And here (h) *Thomas* speaks more sparingly then the later Papists, affirming that they only pray for the resurrection and glory of their bodies, since they stand in need of no other thing to compleat their happiness: But *Al. (i) Alensis* will have them, not only to pray for what they want, but also for what they have, that their happiness may be continued with them. And the common opinion amongst them, though it be not so gross, yet it hath a most fabulous foundation, viz. that the (k) Saints in glory, as to the measure, degree and increase of their happiness, are yet, as it were, on the way, and are subject to some mutation, and thus are capable of a farther measure of happiness which they do pray for, and for all the means whereby this their *accidental happiness* (as they call it) may be promoted.

We will not digress to confute that conceit, and to shew that after (l) death we are judged, and stated into an unalterable condition, that the tree must ly as, and where,

(i) *Apud Swar. in 2. 2. tract. 4. lib. 1. de or. cap. 12. sect. 9.* (k) *Vid. Swar. loc. cit. sect. 11.* (l) *Heb. 9. 27. Eccles. 12. 3. 1 Cor. 9. 24. 25. 1 Tim 4. 7, 8. Rom. 2. 6. 1. Joh. 9. 4.*

it falleth, that this day of our life is the time we have to run the race, to fight the good fight, and that with our dayes we must finish our course, that we must be judged according to the deeds done in the body, after the night of death cometh, no man can work any more; the long day of eternity is for wearing, and not for purchasing the crown, or any pearl to be added to it: And why should I prove what the Lord by a voice from heaven hath attested, that these who die in the Lord are blessed, and that their works done on earth do follow them? but in heaven they rest from their labours, *Rev. 13. 14.* I did think that heaven was our home and (m) resting place; and if after the Saints be come thither, they be yet *in via*, I would ask when they shall come to their journeys end? For I see no reason why unto all eternity they may not alwaies be panting after, and endeavouring for some new addition to their happiness (according to their principles who plead for this accidental felicity, to which they ascribe so great a latitude) for, if after the crown is put on their head, it be lyable to so many changes, I know not when it will be so fixed, that it will suffer no new alteration and addition: If the particular (n) judgment after death doth not state us into an unchangable condition, why should the generall Judgment do it?

(m) Heb. 4.
9, 10.

(n) *Quod enim in die iudicii futurum est omnibus, hoc in singulis die mortis impletur.* Hieronym. in Joel. cap. 2.

(o) *Yea Medina his conceits is more grosse, who affirmeth that neither Gods Word nor works, can be a ground of confidence.*

Deus potesta-

tem suam non alligavit Scripturis & promissis quæ in Scriptura continentur. Jo. Mel. ad. de orat. quest. 6. But of this more part 2. and part 4. where we shall hear Mendoza (b. ugh a Papist) blush at such abominable doctrine.

2. As for *Aleusis* his (o) conjecture, it doth suppose that the Saints shall never be secure of their happiness which they enjoy, and that we shall be still under the Ordinances; and that we must use the means after we have attained the end, that the state of glory is alterable, and the sentence of the great Judge revocable

3. As to *Thomas* his opinion, it is more probable; but the souls in glory, being so fully satisfied with the beatifical vision and fruition of God, they can have no anxiety, fear, inquietness, or dissatisfaction with their present condition; and though their bodies be in the dust, and they may be said to long for the consummation of their happiness, in the ri-

sing again of their bodies, and their partaking (according to their capacity) of the Crown of felicity; yet since they are sure that the day of Coronation (when both soul and body, being united, shall be filled with glory) is approaching, it may be questioned, whether or not they pour out these longings and desires prayer-ways to God? For they being now above Ordinances, and faith being changed into vision, and hope into fruition, it seemeth most agreeable to that state, that prayers also should be changed into continual praises.

As for that place, *Rev. 6. 9, 10.* which is mainly urged for their praying for the consummation of their happiness, (albeit the prayer there mentioned, is intended against their persecutors; and only in the return made, *ver. 11.* there is a word which may aime at the Resurrection, which though it be there promised by God, yet it was not askt by them; and it is mentioned there rather to design the period of time, and date of the return of their prayer, then as a part of it.) I do not deny that some of our (p) Divines do seem to say, that it is a proper prayer; yet we rather think with *Tironius* (whom *Ribera* on that place citeth, and though a Papist doth not reject) that the souls of them who were slain for the Word, are there said to cry for vengeance on persecutors; not that they did truly, and properly pour out any such complaint against them, unto whom, while on earth they prayed for mercy and pardon, but that their sufferings and their blood (like (q) *Abels*) did cry against the murtherers, and such as succeeded to them in their cruelty and persecution.

As for the souls in hell, they are to come to their (as it is said of *Judas*, *Act. 1. 25.* that he went to his) own place; that place of torment, of weeping and gnashing of teeth; that place of despair, cursing and blasphemie (and so cannot be a place of hope, supplication and prayer) they know how false that fancy is, which commonly is ascribed to (r) *Origen*; and that they shall never come out of that

(p) As *Dionat.* on the place, and *Seb. Mayer* apud *Marlorat.* in loc. cit. But *M. Thomas Goodwin* loc. cit. scilicet, 5. ch. 7. pag. 109.

(q) speaks most expressly, affirming that this is not (spoken metaphorically of them, but truly done by them, that not only their blood, but themselves did cry.

(r) *Heb. 21. 24.* Thus also the English Divines, and *Dr. Hamond* interprets the place; and *Mr. Durham*, and *Dr. Farvus*, grants that here is an allusion to the cry of *Abels* blood.

Heb. 12. 24. (r) *Mr. Rolin*

waver. scilicet. 7. quæst. 22. pag. (mihi) 202. à Castro ad ver. bar. lib. 8. de inf. 2. bar. pag. (mihi) 620. August. de heres. cap. 43. But its thought that Origen's writings have been miserably corrupted by hereticks.

(1) Luk. 12.
59. Mat. 5.
26.

prison untill they have (s) payed the very last farthing; and they not being (*olvendo*, and never able to satisfie for the least offence (but must still contract new debt) therefore can conceive no ground of hope that ever they shall escape; and thus in despair they continually belch out cursings and blasphemies.

We do indeed read of a conference between a rich man in hell, and *Abraham*, Luk. 16. 24. &c. Where *Dives* be-moaneth his sad condition unto *Abraham*, but dare not look up to God and present his supplications unto him: But it was for no purpose to him to run to the empty Cistern, after the fountain was stopped; its folly to run to the Saints for help, when the Lord himself doth hide his face. And the scope of this parable (so its conceived to be rather then a History) is to show how hopelesse and remedilesse the condition of the damned is, and that they need not look either to God or man, for help and relief.

Obj.

Ans.

You will say, Is it not their duty to call upon God? are they not as his creatures obliged to worship him? Their prison and bonds, cannot discharge them of that debt. *Ans.* Every part of immediate worship, should rather be considered as the creatures priviledge then duty; though Subjects must wait upon their King, yet they may not approach the Throne without a call; *Whoever, whether man or woman, did thus come unto Ahasuerus into the inner Court, he must die*, none was to be spared but he to whom the King held forth the golden Scepter, *Esth. 4. 11.* And now the damned are (t) chaffs, and God to them is a (u) consuming fire, and he hath told them he will never stretch forth the golden Scepter to them; and therefore they may not, they dare not draw nigh to him, they have lost that *priviledge*, and prayer can be no more a *mean* to them of good, whatever may be said of it under some subtle abstraction, and the naked consideration of it as a duty, which they little mind, or regard; and therefore the very thoughts of a communion with God, and drawing nigh to him in any Ordinance, must be a torment and abhorring unto them; and though they may not, yet it leaves not off to be their sin, that they do not draw nigh to God, because through their

(t) Luk. 3.

37.

(u) Heb. 12.

29.

their own fault they have brought upon themselves that cursed incapacity, which now is (x) both their sin and their misery.

(x) *Peccatum & pena peccati.*

You will say, did not the devil pray to God, and ask a licence to plague *Job*; *Job* 1. 11. and 2. 5. And did not the devils beseech Christ to suffer them to enter into the herd of Swine? *Mat.* 8. 31. *Ans.* Its one thing to (y) ask from God, another thing to pray unto him; though he who prayeth must ask, yet every sort of asking is not a prayer, unless it be a religious asking, by way of adoration and worship; it is a religious offering up of our desires to God, as a part of that homage and service we owe to him, and that thereby he might be glorified: But Sathan did not thus ask from God, whose worship and service he abhorreth, and whom in all his wayes he laboureth to dishonour: and therefore he cannot be said to pray unto him, whatever he may ask from him. Though Papists dare (z) dispute, yet none of them are so impudent, as to deny that *Oratio est actus Religionis*, and that it doth import a religious adoration of God.

Obj.
Ans.
(y) *Petitio est quid communi & quasi genus peccationis, unde recte Swarenz lib. 1. cap. 2. sect. 10 In hac vero materia (inquit) oratio sumitur pro specie quadam perfectissima petitionis quae religiosa sit & ad cultum Dei pertineat, & ideo per petitionem tanquam per genus designatur.*

If you enquire how Sathan dare ask any thing of God, whom he laboureth to dishonour in all his wayes? *Ans.* Though Sathan be already sentenced, and sent to prison; yet that sentence will not be fully executed, as to his torment and confinement, till the great and generall Judgment; and therefore, though now he be in everlasting chains of darkness, yet he is said to be reserved unto the Judgment of the great day, *Jud.* ver. 8. And therefore during this time of hard reprimand, some links of this chain are now and then loosed, and this (a) prisoner is permitted to ascend out of the bottomlesse pit, as an executioner of Gods wrath, to deceive, insnare, and plague a wicked, secure and rebellious world; and he thirsting after mans ruin and misery, and the dishonour of God, may be permitted to ask a licence to plague sinners, and to chastise the godly (though he intend their ruin). And the Lord in wrath to him and the vessels of wrath, and for the tryall of his servants, may give to him, as his Licetor and Officer a commission, and grant his desire, and yet make his work become a (b) snare to himself, and in that great day

(z) *Cum Thom. 2. 2. quest. 83. art. 3.*
(a) *Rev. 20. 7. 30.*
(b) *Some think that Satans torment shall be the greater the more he brings to hell; and thus in some respect they are yet Visions, and are referred unto an additional sentence.*

reckon with him for all his snares and temptations laid before the sons of men.

O! ye who are yet in the land of the living, and under the use of the means; when ye consider the case of the devils and damned, praise God that your case is not as hopelesse and irrecoverable; as theirs, that the door is not yet shut upon you, that ye may draw nigh to God; that the King is yet on the Throne of mercy, stretching out the golden Scepter unto you, so that you need not fear to approach and present your supplications unto him: O! Be of good courage (may I say as they unto blind *Bartimews*, *Mark* 10. 26.) rise, he calleth thee, and if thou answer his call, he will not, he cannot in (c) any wayes reject thee. O! But take heed that thou mispend not and squander away the market day: What knowest thou O man! how soon thy glasse may be turned? it may now be the evening of thy day; O! then run, that night surprize thee not: O! run to the King for a pardon before this short day of thy reprovall be past. I have read of one, who being askt why he prayed so much; O said he, *I must die*; O! remember this, all ye that forget God, that forget your selves, and do not consider what ye have lying at the stake, if you do not present your supplications to the King, while he holds forth the golden Scepter unto you; if thou make not thy peace with him whom thou hast provoked, while thou art in the way, thou wilt be sent to the prison, from which there is no out-coming; *Mat.* 5. 25, 26. Oh! draw nigh to God in time, and consider your wayes before he come against you as an enemy to tear you in pieces, when there will be none to deliver you, *Psal.* 50. 22-15. Though ye would then cry to him, it would be to no purpose; he will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirle-wind, *Prov.* 1. 26, 27. Though thou wouldst howl to God to all eternity, though streams of tears; yea, though of blood should continually drop from thine eyes, it should do thee no good. O! that ye (d) knew in this your day, the things that belong to your peace, before they be hid from your eyes; this is the acceptable

(a) *Joh.* 6. 37.

(d) *Luk.* 19.

42.

acceptable day, this is your day of prayer, and the day of Gods hearing; come then with confidence unto the throne of grace, and he will give you an answer of peace.

Sect. 3.

*To whom is the Golden Scepter stretched forth;
whether the unconverted should pray, &c.*

IN the description of this solemn performance. *Ch. 3.* Its said to be *an offering up of (a) our desires to God*: all we who are on our journey and travelling towards our eternall home, who have so many wants and are exposed to so many tryalls, are called to look up to God, and present our requests unto him; so that it may be called the pilgrims passe, scrip and provision: this sweet duty doth ly upon all who are yet in the land of the living, and it is our priviledge and happinesse that we may thus look up to God for a supply of all our wants, that so long as we are on our journey we have such a kind Master and provisor, who will not deny us any thing that we shall ask of him.

But while we say that prayer is the pilgrims talent, where-with he can only trade in time: though, for time and eternity, for this life and that which is to come, we do not deny Christs intercession: for though our blessed redeemer be entered into the promised land, yet his people and servants are sojourning in the wilderness, and as our surety and head he appeareth in heaven for us, and though he hath no personall wants which he can present to the Father, yet the head in Glory pitieth and compassionateth his suffering members; and thus being touched with the feeling of their wants and infirmities he pleadeth their cause, and maketh continuall intercession for them. We will not now add any thing to what hath been said *(b) Sect. 1.* having spoken of that subject there at so great length; only with *Petrus (c) Tarantasius*, we may

benefactor, sic ci competis orare pro aliis non pro se, quia non indigebat. 1. ut Viator, sic competebat ei orare pro aliis et pro se: omnis namque oratio est pro indigentia quâdam supplenda
Hæc Petrus de Tarantasia apud Dionys. Cartbul. in. 3. sent. dist. 17. quest. 2.

*(a) Our desires
i. e. the desires
of us Viators.*

*(b) Where
having fallen
upon that sweet
subject we
would not make
an interruption
untill we had
spoken what we
conceived ne-
cessary for open-
ing up of that
question, albeis
according to
the rules of me-
thod, much of
that matter did
belong to this
place.*

*(c) Christus se-
cundum quod
Deus orare non
potuit, quia a-
qualis est patri,
secundum quod
homo considera-
tur dupliciter,
1. ut compre-*

here observe, that while Christ was a *Viator*, and till he finished his course on earth and entered into his glory, he prayed not only for others, but also for himself; but now while he is a *comprehensor* and doth sit at the right hand of God, clothed with honor and majestie, and is put in possession of so much felicity as the humane nature is capable of, and thus standing in need of nothing for himself, he can no more pray for himself, but only for his ransomed ones, who in this their pilgrimage are labouring under so much weaknesse and infirmities, and who are lying under so many burdens and wants.

But to speak of us mortalls, who are travelling to eternity, and have this price put in our hands, and this help for our journey, there be here two sorts of persons (as in the former Sections) upon whom this duty doth ly; 1. The godly; 2. The wicked. As for the first, it will not be denyed that Gods children have an (a) access to their Father, purchased to them by the blood of Christ, that they may come boldly unto the Throne of grace; that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need; that in every thing they should let their requests be made known unto God; that the effectuall fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much; that the seed of Jacob do never seek his face in vain; if such knock, he will open; if they seek, they shall find; and whatsoever they shall ask, it shall be given them. And there needs be no more question concerning the wicked, were it not that *Antinomians* Object, If such would draw nigh to God in prayer or any other Ordinance they would the more provoke him to wrath, their prayer being an abomination unto him, *Prov.* 28. 9. And what could such chaffe expect, but that they should be burnt up when they approach to him who is a consuming fire? *Heb.* 12. 29. *Ans.* Its a sad thing to consider how far Sathan (transforming himself into an Angel of light) hath prevailed with some eminent Professors, who laying a great claime to holinesse and Gospel-liberty under that vizard, have opened a door to all loosenesse and profanity: thus these grand preachers of free grace (I mean Antinomian seducers) as they cast off themselves all (a) cords and bonds, calling it

(d) Eph. 2. 18.
Heb. 4. 16.
Philip. 4. 6.
Jam. 5. 16.
Ila. 45. 19.
Mat. 7. 7.
Joh. 14. 13.

Object.

Answer.

(e) See Edwards *Gangrena* in the catalogue of errors, part. 1. pag. (mibi) 11. 26, 27, error 66, 132, 137. Pagits heresiography from 109. Al. Rosse bis παροξ. Sect. 11. quasi. 4.

it a legal course to subject themselves to the holy Law of God, or to look on it as a rule obliging them to conform their actions unto it; so they would exempt the wicked from their duty; telling such that nothing can, or ought to be, done by them for fitting and preparing them to believe and embrace Christ.

And thus they have made all the world, at once Out-laws; and happy must the world now at length become, when there is no such thing in it as sin: Which will of necessity flow from these principles; for where there is no Law, obliging the sons of men to conformity and obedience, there can be no sin; sin being nothing else but *the transgression of the law*, 1 Joh. 3. 4. But they tell us, that now under the Gospel there is no such thing as a Law obliging any man to obey it; yea, some have come that length of impudence, as to (f) affirm, that Christians are not only free from the mandatory power of the Law, but that it is blasphemous in Divinity, and monstrous in Nature to make the Law a rule of life. Thus one of them in the Pulpit cried, *Away with the Law which cuts off a mans legs, and then bids him walk*: And thus not only the godly, but also the wicked are become (g) Libertines, yea, and innocent and sinlesse creatures. 1. The godly, because they not being under the Law, but under grace and the immediate direction of the Spirit, they cannot be said to transgress the Law. 2. Neither will the wicked be found guilty; for they, not being obliged to do any thing, or to use the means for obtaining of grace, nor to mourne for sin, repent, pray, &c. they cannot be guilty of the breach of any (affirmative at least) precept; nay say they, those who will not follow such a course, do run away from Christ to themselves, from the Gospel to the Law; and the further they go on in that way, they must provoke the Lord the more; all their performances being an abomination unto him, whom without Faith (which they have not) they cannot please, Heb. 11. 6.

We may not now stay to confute these Dreamers. Only for removing what is now objected against the wicked, their obligation, duty, and liberty to pray. We would offer these few Assertions.

(f) Eph. Pag. 106, 107.
Al. Rolfe.
loc. cit.

(g) According to their assertion, that neither good works profit unto salvation, nor can ill works do any hurt. See Eph. Pag. 106. loc. cit.

Asser.

Affer. 1. The Gospel, as it is not opposite unto, and destructive of, the natural and morall Law, so neither doth it abolish or diminish that obligation, which the Law at its first promulgation did lay upon the sons of men: We are no lesse then the Jews, lyable to that curse, *Gal.* 3. 10. If we do not obey it in all things; how doth the Apostle, *Rom.* 3. 21 abominat the Antimonian fancy? *Do we then make void the Law through faith, God forbid; yea* (saith he) *we establishe it?* Turks, Pagans, Jews and Christians, Belcevers and Unbelcevers, are all alike under the directive, and mandatory power of the Law: And therefore since Prayer is a morall duty prescribed in the first Commandement; and which Pagans by the dark lamp of nature, have discovered, as flowing from the dictates of the primavall Law, which God at first did write in the heart of man, and doth yet so far abide in man, as he is a reasonable Creature; that though he hath not a Law, yet by nature, he may do the things contained in the Law, *Rom.* 2. 14, 15. There is yet so much light in that old ruinous house, as to discover a Deity, and to point out this sanctuary and refuge in the time of need; and accordingly the most rude and heathenish people, have hither run for help in the day of their calamity: What ever in their vain imaginations they fancied to be God, to it they made their addresse and presented their supplications. So that Antimonians would do well to go to School, and learn of them the truth of this particular. The heathen Mariners, *Jonah* 1. 5, 6. did prove better casuists; they knew better what course to take in that tempest, then if they had had those Seducers to have taught them; yea, such Dreamers should have been a greater offence to them then sleeping *Jonah*: If they thought strange to see one man not busie at prayer in that storm, what would they have thought of him who would have told them, that they should not pray? That they themselves would do better to sleep, then to take Gods name in their mouth; I think they should not have cast lots for finding out the man, for whose cause that evill was upon them, but the Antimonian, without deliberation, in *Jonah* his stead, should have been cast into the Sea.

Unreasonable Creatures cannot pray!

Asser. 2. As the moral and natural law doth bind and oblige all men; so in every man there is some power and ability for doing and performing what it doth hold out unto him, as his duty: we do not say, that men by nature are able to keep any of the commandments in a spiritual manner, much lesse that they can perfectly keep the commandments, but that they can do the thing commanded, they can perform the external acts, and the substance of many moral duties; Though, 1. the principle from which, 2. The end to which, And, 3. the manner of performance be corrupt and naught.

Asser. 3. As the unregenerate are obliged to do, having gotten some light to discern their duty, and some power and ability for doing; so if they make conscience of their duty, and honestly endeavour to improve the little strength and few talents which they have received, their labour shall not be lost: for albeit gracious habits be not acquired by our labour and industry, but immediatly infused by the Spirit of God (as without our physicall concurrence and activity, so also without any kind of moral-influence and causality by way of merit and deserving on our part) yet by frequenting the Ordinances, (for I do not now speak of those who are without the pale of the visible Church) and going about duties, as we are able, (though we cannot do so much as make our selves negatively good, and to be without sin, yet) we may thus become lesse evil, and not so indisposed and unfit for grace; some thing of the stubbornesse of the will, and of its averfenesse from what is good may be removed, and some inclinations (though moral and not gracious) may thus be wrought, begotten and stirred up in the heart, and the man (like the scribe, *Mark. 12. 34.*) may be brought near to the kingdom of God; and though the Lord be not tied to such previous dispositions, (so that he must help forward the work and bring it to perfection when and where these are placed, or that he cannot work without such legal and previous preparations) yet ordinarily he observeth that method, it is his usual way to help us, when being sensible of *the (b) plague of our own hearts*, we are wrestling (b) 1 King 8.
N and 38

and tugging at duty, and seeking after him in the use of the means he hath prescribed.

So that in carrying on of that blessed work we may take notice of these severall steps, 1. God, by the common operation of his Spirit, doth awaken the secure sleeping sinner, and lets him see his misery; 2. He discovereth to him his duty and the way how he may escape and come out of that state; 3. He stirreth him up and setteth him a work; 4. After that for a while the man hath wearied himself in thus wrestling by his own strength, the Lord humbleth him and layeth him low, and makes him despair in himself, and see that by his doing he cannot help himself; and having thus killed; Then, 5. he maketh (i) alive, and having wounded then he heals, and maketh the spirit of bondage a forerunner of the Spirit of Adoption: and when the poor sinner is thus, as it were, hopelesse and helplesse, then he pointeth out to him the brasen serpent, that he may look (k) to it and live.

(i) Deut. 32.
39.

(k) Isa. 45.
22.

And thus wee see how legal performances and the use of the means in the strength received (though it be but litle) riddeth room in the heart, and maketh way to the right embracing and closing with Christ; In that, 1. it taketh off the heart in great part from vain and sinfull objects; 2. It keepeth off many temptations; 3. It begetteth some desire and inclination to that which is good and well-pleasing unto God; which disposition and affection is not over-thrown and removed, but only refined and spiritualized in the work of conversion, while selfish and carnal motives and ends are abandoned, and a new principle of life and motion infused; and thus the former inclination becometh as a material disposition to the new birth, making the subject more fit and capacious to bring forth, and entertain the mar-child; like as drynesse in timber disposeth and fitteth it for the fire, and maketh it combustible: so that these legal performances, the frequenting the Ordinances and pouring out of the soul in prayer according to the present ability, doth not only, 1. *Negatively* dispose the soul for grace; by removing obstructions and impediments; and cutting off some leaves, yea and branches of sin, and drawing out some sap from

from the root; But also, 2. positively, by begetting these positive qualifications, which (though purged and rectified) remain after conversion, as siccity doth in the tree while it burneth; and lastly by using the means and attending the Ordinances, we cast our selves in Christs way: and who dare say that the compassionat Physician will not pity the halt and the lame while he goeth by? Certainly such as do cast themselves in his way are at a fair venture, Christs invitation, yea and command (which all who are under the Gospel-call have) doth open a large door of hope, and may be lookt on as a sufficient warrand for success to the obedient: the sick and diseased had not such an encouragement to come unto him while he was on earth, and yet they would venture, and their labour was not lost, he healed them all; none were sent away empty, and many got more then they sought; they came to have their bodily diseases cured, and he often healed both soul and body.

And thus it may appear, that wicked men should pray, yea and that with some sort of confidence they may draw nigh unto God. We will not now meddle with the Jesuitical and Arminian principles, and two great Aphorisms, viz. 1. *facienti quod in se est, Deus non denegat gratiam*. 2. *Deus neminem deserit nisi prius deseratur*; i. e. 1. God will not deny his grace to him that improveth the strength he hath; 2. God will leave none till he first leave God, and slight his work and service; he will help forward the beginnings of a saving work, if we do not draw back. We know they can admit an orthodox glosse, according to which (1.) *Zamel* and *Alvarez*, these two great Patrons of physicall predetermination amongst the Papists, and *Tuiss* and *Rutherford*, amongst our Divines, will not reject them; and we have said nothing that will import such an infallible connexion between our endeavours and Gods acceptance and remuneration thereof, as will inferre, or look towards any of these axiomes as they are urged and interpreted by the adversaries.

Although these divines apply these axiomes to the converted, yet what they say may be extended to our case and to those who are on the way to conversion. See Francis willfull impieties,

(1) *Zuni. var. disp. ad 1. & 2. tom. 3. pag. 257. 214. 254. 351. & tom. 2. pag. 135. Alvar. de. aux. disp. 58. § 7. & disp. 113. § 12. & resp. lib. 3. cap. 5. § 12. & de. aux. disp. 49. § 2. disp. 56. § 6. & 12. disp. 59. per. tom. & resp. lib. ult. cap. 20. § 2. Gul. Tuissad. Corr. def. tom. Til. pag. 359. & pag. 106. 107. 90. 98. &c. Rhet. de provid. cap. 26. &c.*

Now we come to speak to the objection, which needs not the hand of an enemy to overthrow it, there being fire enough in its own bosome to consume and dissolve the knot; 1. Then as to that place, *Hab. 12.* any who will look on the context, may at the first view discern, that the main scope of that Chapter is to perswade and exhort unto faith, patience, and to draw nigh unto God with reverence and godly fear; and then, *v. 39.* we have a pressing motive subjoynd, because *God is a consuming fire*; but to whom? (let me ask) Is it not to briars and thornes that darstand in battell array against him, who *(as)* run away from him and cast off the cords of duty, *Isa. 27. 4.* But as to them who submit, who draw nigh to him in his Ordinances, and present their complaints and supplications unto him, he is full of mercy and compassion; that is the way, and the only right way to escape the everlasting flames of divine vengeance, that is the way (according to the following words, *v. 5.*) *To take hold of his strength and make peace with him.* Behold then how deluders abuse the Scriptures, and dare make use of that to drive men away from God, which the holy Ghost holds out as a motive to chase them in to God.

(m) While we turn our back on duty, we fight against the command and set ourselves against his sovereign authority who commands.

As to the place, *Prov. 28. 9.* Whose prayer is said there to be abomination unto the Lord? We need go no further then the words to find an answer; for, saith that Text, *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination, but if the wicked will turn from his sins, he shall surely live, Ezek. 18. 21, 28.* Unto the wicked God saith, what hast thou to do to take my Covenant in thy mouth? But if he will forsake his wickedness, if he will vow unto the Lord and pay his vows, then saith the Lord, come and call upon me in the day of trouble and I wil deliver thee, *Psal. 50. 16. 15.* The Lord must be sanctified in all them that draw nigh to him, *Levit. 10. 3.* If thou wilt not actively honour him by thy work, he will vindicate his own honour in thy just punishment, and make thee a passive instrument thereof, and a subject whereon his justice will work. And therefore, considering that thus the Lord is a consuming fire, should we therefore withdraw from

from his service and not approach the fire? Nay, saith the Lord in that place, *Heb. 12. 28.* Ye must not do so, ye cannot escape that way; *for whether shall we flee from his presence, Psal. 139. 7.* But let us the rather, and upon any terms draw nigh to him, and in our approach take the better heed to our steps, *that we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.* The wicked must not draw nigh with their lips and remove their heart far away, *Isa. 39. 13.* they must not draw nigh to God in their sins while they love them, and resolve to follow that trade; if thou regard iniquity in thy heart, the Lord will not hear thy prayer, *Psal. 66. 18.* and while thou draws nigh, thou must take heed that thou present not a treacherous libel to the King; thou must not ask provision for Sathans work and sweets to feed thy lusts, *Jam. 4. 3.* If Antinomians would only plead against lip-labour, formality and hypocrisy in drawing nigh to God; and that none should with that impudent woman, *Prov. 7. 14.* dare to approach Gods Altar, that thereby they may either cloak and palliare their sins, that they may commit it with the more freedom and lesse suspicion, or that thereby they may hire God, and purchase a licence from him to follow that cursed trade; if (I say) those Seducers, would only argue against lip-labour and hypocrisy in Gods service, all the servants of God and the Word of God would joyn with them; for that's not prayer but prattling, not service done to God, but an intolerable mockery of his holy Majesty; that's not to draw nigh to God, but to step aside from him; for while the heart is removed, all is removed; and the (n) distance is still made greater and greater; but under this Pretence to cry down the use of the means, which God hath appointed for healing and softning the heart, is as abominable as to teach, that these who are on the way to hell, should continue in that way, and not endeavour to go out of it and turn; that they should not (s) strive to enter in at the strait gate, nor search after the narrow way that leadeth unto life.

O I but (may these Seducers say) without faith it is impossible to please God, *Heb. 11. 6.* Wherefore then should these

(n) See Ch. 4,

(o) Mat. 23, 14

these who have not faith, spend their time and strength in wrestling with duties, which (since they cannot please God) cannot profit the workers? *Ans.* Without faith it is impossible to please God, as his friend, as reconciled to him, as his son, &c. There is no justification nor peace with God without faith, whereby we lay hold on him who is our (p) peace, reconciliation, righteousness and sanctification; without faith the person cannot please him, the state and condition of the man is unsafe, naught and loathsome to God, and therefore the work cannot please him: The tree must be good before it bringeth forth good fruit. the Lord first hath pleasure in the *person*, then in his *work*; first he had respect to *Abel*, then to his offering, *Gen.* 4. 4. Yet in some (q) respect, the works and endeavours of the unregenerate, who are on their way to a change, may be said to please God; the travail and pangs of the new birth, our wrestling with the strong man till he be cast out, cannot be displeasing to him for whom thus room is made in the heart; yea, not only these works, which have a more immediate connexion with grace, are thus in some respect pleasing to God: But also the very first endeavours and breathings after God, do so far please God and are approved of him, as that he will accept of them as some steps (though not in, yet) towards the way, so that by these the man is brought a little (r) nearer the kingdom of God, he is in some measure fitted and disposed for grace.

And the Lord, in these three respects, may be said to be pleased with, and accept such endeavours and duties performed by men, not yet (s) translated from death to life, though looking (with *natures* eye weeping, and being a little annointed and (t) enlightened by the common operation of the Spirit) towards God.

(p) Eph. 2.
14, 15, 16.
1 Cor. 1. 30.

(q) *Placere Deo, est non modo communiter approbari tanquam voluntati suae non aduersum quomodo-omnia bona naturalia & in-differentia dicuntur placere Deo: sed ita acceptari tanquam, &c. placere Deo est justificari D. Parvus in loc.*

(r) Mark. 12.
34.
(s) 1 Joh. 3.
14.
(t) 2 Pet. 2.
21.

(u) Or in these four respects,
1. Negatively
2. Positively,
3. Comparatively, and
4. Relatively.

1. (*u*) *Positively*, because as to the matter and substance, these duties are good and agreeable to the rule, though as to the manner and way of performance there be many defects.

2. *Comparatively*, and that in these two respects, 1. Because God is better pleased with such approaches to him, than with

with the running from him to the excess of riot; and though the Sow when washed, is still a (x) Sow, and hath not laid aside its nature, yet it is more pleasing, or rather (if ye would expresse it *negatively*) lesse displeasing then when she wallowed in the mire; yes, and 2. Because such performances and endeavours are more acceptable and agreeable to the will of God, then the omission and not performance of these duties: Nay, our Divines generally confesse that the moral (y) vertues of Pagans, and the exercise of these, were upon the matter good, and that the doers (though they did not refer their work to a spiritual end) were less guilty and evil then if they had omitted these duties; albeit upon a spiritual and theological consideration, they might well be called by (z) *Augustine*, *splendida peccata*, beautiful and shining sins.

3. *Relatively*, as means which he hath appointed to be the way of conveyance of grace, and which he so far accepteth, as usually to make them reach the end; Thus *Rom.* 10. 17. *Faith is said to come by hearing*; and why not also by prayer? While *Cornelius* was fasting and praying, behold a messenger from heaven was sent unto him to shew him what he should do, *Act.* 10. 30. While *Paul* was praying, *Ananias* was sent unto him to open his eyes, *Act.* 9. 11, 17. We will not enquire whether *Cornelius* and *Paul* were then converted or not. But behold here an (a) extraordinary blessing upon the use of the ordinary means; thy prayers and thine almes (saith the Angel to *Cornelius*, *Act.* 10. 4,) are come up for a memorial before the Lord: Enquire for *Paul*, why? what's the matter? For (saith the Lord, *Act.* 9. 11,) behold he prayeth.

O sinners! whose trade hath been to destroy your selves in departing from God; O! all ye who are yet strangers to this heavenly employment of speaking with your Maker, I have a glad message unto you to day; what ever have been your provocations, or whatever be your present fears, yet look up to him whom ye have so often provoked; and if ye will forsake the evil of your wayes and present your supplications unto him, ye need not fear, he will not deal with you

(x) 1 Pet. 2. 22. *non solum*

(y) *Virtutes morales fidei-um specie et formaliter non differre à virtutibus Ethicorum ab Aristotele desultis; multis conatur ostendere, Frid.*

Wendel. phil. mor. lib. 1.

cap. 7. *quest.*

2. idcirco in Christianorum scriptis docendas, cap. 1.

quest. 12.

(z) *Vid.* August. vindictam apud Chamier.

passat. 11m.

3. lib. 4. *et*

sophismata

Bell. *refutata.*

(a) *In*bas a

voice from

heaven should

scd. *Corneli-*

us to Peter to

enquire after

him, and

Ananias to

Paul to en-

quire for him.

(b) 1 Kings
2. 17. 23.
Adonijah (as
would appear)
in that parti-
cular did most
bumbly suppli-
cate Solomon,
though the
reasons alleg-
ed by Diodati
and others
might prevail
with Solomon
justly to deal
with him
as he did.

as Solomon dealt with (b) Adonijah, he will not tear thy sup-
plication, and make it a dietray against thee for taking away th
life; only beware of Adonijah his heart, do not design trea-
son (as it is thought he did) while thou presents thy desire to
the King; if then thou wouldst ask what course thou shouldst
take that thou mightest be saved, I would tender thee no
better advice then Peter did to Simon the Sorcerer, while he
was yet in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, Act. 8.
23, 22. repent of thy wickedness and pray God, if perhaps
the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee.

And to presse this so necessary advice and exhortation, let us
briefly, by way of motive and encouragement, hold forth some
grounds, which may serve as so many arguments to vindicate
the point from the Antimonian dream. 1. What ground hast
thou to entertain the least scruple, concerning thy duty to pray
to God and bemoan thy condition to him, to perform this part
of worship, which not only thy indigence, but also his honour
calls for at thy hands; what seest thou? what do Antimoni-
ans hold forth unto thee for taking off the yoke and obligation,
which thy condition and dependance, thy wants and fears,
and Gods law written in thy heart and in the Scriptures doth
lay upon thee? Can thy former wickedness make thee now
a Libertine? can it pull out thy shoulders from under the
yoke? 2. Thou being convinced of thy duty, wilt thou ask
whether thou mayest perform it or not? There can hardly be
a clearer contradiction imagined then, to say its my duty to
pray, and yet I may not, I ought not to pray; I am infinitely
obliged to do, and yet I should not do; for what call ye duty
but that which we are obliged to do? Was there ever such a
subtile notion as to abstract duty from the obligation to do?
Or can there be a more unreasonable fancy, then to say that
these who are under the means may not use them? true it is,
that after death the case is altered, thou art no more under
the means, neither doth the King call and invite thee to come;
but yet even then, if he would hold forth the golden Scepter
to the damned (as now he doth to the unconverted) they were
obliged so draw nigh the Throne. 3. Art thou not convinced
that grace is lovely and desirable? and from whom canst thou
desire

desire it but from God? and that's to pray; for, what is prayer but an offering up of our desires to God? 4. For thy warrant thou hast the command of God, again and again repeated in the Word. 5. Many sad threatnings denounced against kingdoms, families and persons that will not call upon God. 6. Thou hast seen, heard and mayest read of many judgments temporal and spiritual, poured out upon such as did not call upon him. 7. We may with the Apostle in another case, 1 *Cor.* 11. 14. appeal to nature it self; doth it not teach him that is in misery to cry to him who is able to help and relieve, and to intreat him whom he hath wronged and offended to pardon and forgive? Thus the light of nature discovereth this duty to Pagans, and as with a double cord bindeth it unto thee, who also hast the light of the Word pointing out that way to thy feet. 8. Several talents bestowed on thee for this effect, do call to thee to improve them: What? hast thou not some natural power and ability to desire and expresse (though not in a spiritual and saving way) thy desires to God? 9. Doth not thy conscience draw thee to the Throne? Doth it not accuse and challenge thee, when thou omittest this necessary and (as I may call it) natural duty? 10. Hast thou not many wants, fears, &c. and what do all these say unto thee, but O! run to the Throne for a supply and remedy? 11. The greatness of the priviledge, that thou mayest approach the great King, doth call upon thee to improve it, together with the great benefits which thereby may be purchased. Yea, 12. though there were no other income then the present effect, which usually it hath on the heart to enlarge, fit, and in some measure dispose it for becoming a temple for the holy Ghost, and to be a fit room to receive and welcome the King with all his train of attendant graces, which are the harbingers of glory; nay it is not only a disposition, but a beginning of the saving work; prayer, if serious, is a turning of the heart to God, its a spiritual and converting motion of the soul, its the first breathing of the new creature: desire of grace (say Divines) is grace. Certainly if it be effectual and resolute, it must be so; and desire is the life of prayer, and without it

O

there

there is no prayer, so that such as forbid the unregenerate to pray, do diswaile them to be converted and turn to God, or begin the saving work of grace; prayer is not only a *converting ordinance*, but also the first breathing of the *converted*; not only a mean, but also a part and the first fruit of *conversion*. 13. The doleful and sad consequents, that must follow the contempt of this promising remedy, the King ere it be long will tear these proud rebels in pieces, who would not submit and supplicate him for a pardon. 14. The great advantage that may be expected, that probability, if not certainty of successe that God will fulfill thy desire, may as a strong cord draw thee nigh to God; thou shalt not one, but many encouragements to excite and set thee a work 1. Gods bowels opened (in the Ordinances) and his arms stretched forth to embrace thee. 2. His call and invitation, his counsel, entreaties, requests, exhortations, &c. together with his solemn protestation, that he delights not in the sinners ruine, but rather that he would draw nigh to him, that he might live: while the King inviteth the traitor to come and seek his pardon, what should discourage him? 3. His Ordinance and appointment, in making prayer a mean for that end: they who teach that sinners cannot expect a blessing on their offering up their desires to God, do say (yea though we did abstract from his fidelity in fulfilling his promises) that God hath appointed that Ordinance in vain. 4. His stirring up the heart and filling it (though by a common work of the Spirit) with such desires and purposes as are fit materials of prayer, do say, that if we will improve that season, the Lord purposeth not to send us away empty; he will not be wanting to promote what good he begins to work in us, till we resist his Spirit and first draw off and lye by, and thus stifle the new birth in its conception. 5. Gods satisfying the natural appetite of inanimate creatures, and fulfilling the sensual desires of the brutes and brutish requests of sensual men: when selfish *Ababa* have opened their mouths for outward mercies and deliverances, he hath filled them many a time, and casten such bones to these dogs, while they drew nigh their masters table and looked up to him. 6. The example of others, who have

have followed the like course, the success that weary and laden sinners have alwayes met with, may be (though thou hadst no more) encouragement enough for going about this sweet and promising duty: There is none in hell to day, who dare say that they took them to this course, and constantly pursued it with such diligence and enlargement of heart and affections as they might, and according to that measure of strength they had, and yet were no better; when they had done what in them lay, they could not help the matter, there was no remedy but they must perish: nay, nay, but their consciences can testifie against them, that they were slothful and did neglect the means, that they would not present their requests to God and constantly pursue their suit, and so they did perish, not in the use of the means, but because they would not further use the means God had appointed for obtaining of mercy and salvation.

You will say, till men believe they cannot ask in faith nothing wavering, for they cannot lay hold on a promise; and therefore they need not think they shall receive any thing of the Lord, *Jam. 1. 6, 7.* *Ans.* The Apostle speaketh not there of the faith whereby we are justified (though it be true he supposeth it to be in the subject) but of the faith of (c) *audience*, whereby we certainly expect a return of our prayers, as (d) afterwards shall appear. And he speaketh to beleivers, exciting them to exercise their faith, as to that particular act which reacheth the success of prayer, and certifieth the supplicant that his labour shall not be lost; so this place doth not concern the unregenerate: And yet while they are minding a change and looking up to God for help, there may be in them some shadow of this faith; as of that mentioned, *Heb. 11. 6.* (which importeth one and the same thing with this) he may in some measure believe that God *is*, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him; he may upon the former and such like grounds, draw nigh to God in some sort of confidence and expectation of success, which if it serve to stir him up and hold him at his work, if it keep him from wearying and fainting in his addresses to God, may be supposed to be sufficient for that state and condition

Obj.

Ans.

(c) *W*hile yet is not a distinct faith, but a different consideration of one and the same principle, a reference to another kind of act flowing from it.

(d) *Vid.* part. 2.

(c) We purpose to speak to this question in another place (if the Lord will) and therefore will not now digress to speak to it at any length.

You will say, may not wicked men lay hold on a (c) promise for audience and success? *Ans.* 1. Though the wicked may not claim a right to any qualified and conditional promise, since he hath not as yet (though he be in the way (for we do not now speak of swine wallowing in the mire) to obtain) these qualifications and conditions, which the promise doth suppose in him to whom it is made; yet who knows that he is not under the absolute promises? God hath promised to quicken the dead, to give a new heart, and to write his law in the heart of some men, and who dare say he is not the man? and certainly all these to whom these promises do belong, shall in due time have them accomplished in them; and this looks to be the very time, when thou art panting after the Lord, and wrestling at the Throne: and therefore if thou do not faint, thou must prevail.

2. The promises, for the most part are conceived in such general terms, without any qualification; as *Mat.* 7. 7. *Luk.* 11. 9. *Isa.* 55. 2, 3. &c. that thou shouldst not question and dispute away thy interest in them, and through thy diffidence turn thy back on thy duty, and thus exclude thy self from the promise annexed to it; thou shouldst not then so much perplex thy self, concerning Gods purpose to pitty thee, and his promise to hear thee (for as yet these may be hid from thee) as thou shouldst be diligent in going about thy duty, thou needst not doubt of that, what needst thou then linger and delay? O! cast away all such discouragements and follow thy duty, and thus in the use of the means, cast thy self over upon the promises, and ere it be long thou mayest find, that there was room enough there left for thee to write in thy name, and then come to know what was Gods purpose towards thee.

3. Gods call and invitation, hath much of a promise in it; he is serious in his offers, he doth not complement with thee, when he inviteth thee to come to him, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Rev.* 22. 17. &c. When he inviteth to open to him, *Rev.* 3. 20, &c. if thou wilt come, he will make thee welcome.

And then, 4. The command of God hath half a promise in the bosome of it; and certainly all the commandments do belong

belong to thee, as well as to the most holy men on earth ; for what hath made thee a Libertine, and exempted thee from duty ?

O ! then, be of good courage ; I tell thee (as they did *Bartimeus* for his comfort) he calleth thee, yea, and commandeth thee to come : Ah ! what mean ye thus to doubt, debate, and dispute away the market-day, and let the golden opportunity slip : If such a voice were heard in hell, if these wretches were once more invited to make their requests to God, would they thus dispute and question ? would they refuse to labour in Gods vineyard, without a bond for their hire ? nay, it would be a glad voice to them, and they would seek after no other security and warrant, then his call and invitation. O ! then, while its called to day hearken to his voice, that it be not your case, for ever to weep and wail for loosing such an opportunity ; O ! then, cast away (as *Bartimeus* did his garments, when Christ called him) all impediments and hinderances ; cast off these garments of sin, your lusts, and these (f) weights that so easily beset you, and run to the Scriptures for light, fall on your knees, run to the Throne, run to the father, and say, *I am not worthy to be called thy son* ; and when he seeth thee, yet (g) as far off, he will meet thee, and fall on thy neck and kiss thee ; thus he hath dealt with such prodigals, and why will he not also thus welcome thee ? Is there any in hell or on earth, that can give an instance to the contrary, and say, I am the man who thus came to God, and yet was rejected ? It may be indeed, that some being awakened by some outward, or inward rod, have now and then fallen into some good fits and moods, but that early dew hath been quickly dried up, and what crop could then be expected from that stony ground ? Thou mayest indeed make some steps towards the right way, and yet weary, and sit up long ere thou come to it ; but canst thou tell me the man, who took this course and constantly pursued it, who continued instant in prayer and met with a repulse ?

Let Antimonians then bark and declaim against duties, and the use of the means God hath appointed, yet rest thou on Gods Word, who hath said, (h) *ask, and it shall be given*

(f) Heb. 12.

(g) Luk. 15.

20.

(h) Mat. 7.

you,

(i) Isa. 65. 2.

(k) I speak of
the adult, the
Lord hath a
way unknown
to us for
saving young
ones.

you, (whoever thou art, thou art not excluded, unless by refusing to perform the condition, thou exclude thy self) *seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you*: But what ground of hope and expectation, can these Seducers hold out unto thee, if thou wilt not ask? I know not. Though the Lord hath been (i) found of them that sought him not, yet there is none found of him, whom he stirreth not up to ask; so that, if thou do not ask, thou shalt never receive; there is (k) none in heaven, who were not supplicants on earth.

But Ah! though none of you do scruple concerning your duty, and though you think your labour would not be lost, yet how many of you are practical Antimonians? though all of you abominate their *doctrines*, yet too many of you make it *the rule*, whereby ye walk; ye will not speak against prayer, yet whoever heard your voice in prayer (except in a customary formal way) ye will not *condemn* them who pray, and yet will rather *damn* your own souls then pray; ye do not away with the doctrine of deluded sectaries, and yet ye dance as their pipe playeth: What is said of hereticks, *Tis. 3. 11.* may well be applied to such Atheists, they are self-condemned, they are: (l) unexcusable in judging Antimonians, while they walk according to the rule they set before them.

(l) Rom. 2. 2.

I have too long insisted on this point: But my main aim was to hold out a caveat for preventing this practical Antimonianisme, which accompanieth an Orthodox profession; and I will say no more now to the speculative Antimonians, these wretched opiniators, after I have mentioned their cruelty, not only to the wicked, in shutting the door on them, but also to the Saints in *excluding*, or (as we may call it) *excommunicating* them from this solemn and soul-comforting Ordinance, yea then, when they stand most in need of consolation, to wit, in their sad nights of desertion, when neither sun nor moon doth shine upon them, when the Lord withdraws the refreshing beams of his countenance, and the sealing and witnessing testimony of his Spirit; that (m) candle of the almighty, whereby we might be guided and encouraged in the greatest darkness, occasioned by the eclipse

(m) Job. 29. 3.

eclipse of creature comforts; when they are thus, as it were, hopelesse and helplesse, when they cannot see to read their names written in the book of life, nor discern any seal at their charter, and thus are in hazard to draw sad conclusions against themselves, O! then must these (*) miserable comforters say, to these children of light, while they are thus walking in darknesse, beware that ye draw not nigh to God, since ye are not assured of your adoption and reconciliation; for if ye have the least jealousie and suspicion, the least scruple and doubt concerning his love, ye may provok him to become a consuming fire unto you, if you should draw nigh to him: may say they, these legall terrors, and spirit of bondage, and the want of assistance do not only evidence some present distemper, and fit of unbelief, but also the want and absence of faith; and therefore those doubters must be enrolled with unbelievers, and such must be (o) legall preachers who exhort either the one or the other to pray.

(n) see Ephr.
Pagit, loc. cit.

(o) see Pagit
loc. cit.

CHAP. VI.

Of the object to which we should direct our Prayers.

Whoever calleth upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved. Rom. 10. v. 13.

How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? v. 14.

1. *We will shew to whom we may and should direct our prayers.*
2. *To whom we may not bow the knee, not to Saints, or angels; nor to any other creature: and accordingly this Chapter may be divided in two parts.*

SECT. I.

To whom should we pray?

Not only, 1. the word of God; and, 2. the practice of all the saints; but, 3. the very light of nature, these reliques
of

Of sound reason, yet abiding in corrupt man; and, 4. the practice of heathens and pagans do clearly shew to the blindest eye that prayer and every part of worship, should be directed to God: for although the nations were foolish and ridiculous in their apprehensions of God, yet whatever they fancied to be God, to it they did present their supplications. We need not then spend time in demonstrating so clear and unquestionable a truth; for not only, 1. Gods sovereignty in governing the world according to his good pleasure, 2. his omniscience, 3. his power, 4. his mercy and tender bowels ready to pittie and relieve his creatures, &c. but all the grounds and reasons that hold out the necessity of this duty, do also prove that it should be directed to God.

But whether or not we should pray to Christ as Mediator, and perform any point of worship to him under that formality, is questioned in the schooles: I say that its disputed whether or not Christ should be worshiped under that reduplication and formality? for otherwise its certain and will be denied by none who profess the name of Christ, (except the blasphemous Arrians and Socinians, these fighters against the God-head of the Mediator, and yet these do not agree in this amongst themselves; *Socinus* himself with many of his Disciples pleading for the adoration of Christ, against *Franciscus Davidis* and his party; though not (a) consequentially to his principles) all Divines I say whether Popish or Protestant agree in this, that the Mediator should be worshiped adored and invocated, that we should trust in him and pray to him, who is ever all, God blessed for ever, amen, *Rom. 9.5*. Yet there be two particulars that here fall under debate, 1. under what formall reason and consideration Christ should be worshipped; 2. whether or not our worship be terminated in his humane nature, if it doth share with his God-head in that worship which is tendered up to the Mediator in whom the divine and humane nature are personally united. But since these questions belong to another subject, and here only occasionally fall in, as having no great influence on this duty; and our carriage therein nor depending upon their determination, we remit such problematick speculations

(a) *Franciscus Davidis* challengeth *Socinus* of idolatry for worshipping a mere creature, and *Socinus* denieth that such should be acknowledged for brethren who will not worship the redeemer. vid. *Socin. de ador. Christi. advers. Christi. Franken. & in epistol. & Hoonb. Soc. conf. tom. 1. lib. 1. cap. 9.*

tions to the Schools, where they are disputed with greater (b) animosity than (c) perspicuity; but sober Christians, who use not, need not trouble themselves with such subtilities and formalities, have no reason to stumble, because of such debates amongst judicious and orthodox Divines; for albeit, not a few affirm; 1. that nothing is adorable except the divine nature; and 2. that nothing except the Deity, can be the formal reason of adoration and worship, yet its granted on all hands; 1. that its blasphemous once to imagine, that the Mediator should not be adored, worshiped and invoked; 2. that because he is Mediator, and hath redeemed us, therefore we should worship him according to that full word (though too far extended by Dr. Ames) Revel. 5. 12, 9. *Worthy is the lamb that was slain, to receive power and wisdom, strength, honour and glory*, because (*ὅτι quia non quatenus ut interpretatur Ames.*) *thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God*: and accordingly the four and twenty Elders, and all the creatures in heaven and earth, fall down and worship him, ver. 13, 14. 3. Its certain, that as Christ is God, he is equal with the Father and holy Ghost, and that also the three persons of the blessed Trinity, are the last, chief and ultimate object of our worship, so also, that Christ as Mediator is the formal and immediat object of our faith and worship, by whom, and in whose name we must offer it up, without whom we may not draw nigh to God in any point of service, we may not trust in him, nor call upon him; he is the way, none can come unto God but by him, *Joh. 14. 6.* He is our Peace-maker and Advocat, there is no other Mediator between God and man, *1 Tim. 25, 6. Eph. 2. 18. 2 Cor. 5. 29.*

(b) These who stand for the negative, challenging those who plead for the affirmative in these questions for idolatry and creature-worship; they accusing them of impiety, if not blasphemy, for not worshipping the Mediator in both his natures, and because of his office.

(c) As may appear from these testimonies, which Dr. Ames (in answer. asserts. theol. do ador. Christi) altogether ledgeth for his opinion; whereas, the same Authors in several other places, may also be made use of against

his opinion: and on the other hand, Dr. Voet. who hath been at the greatest pains of any (whom I have seen) to clear the question as to the negative, yet hath several expressions, which seem to yield as much as Dr. Ames doth plead for, vid. Voet. (et. disp. pag. 526, 527, 535, 536, 549. &c. And again, Dr. Ames seemeth to concede as much as Dr. Voet. doth affirm in the passages cited by Dr. Voet, loc. cit. page 528. the judicious Gryllorius rideth the marches best of any whom I have perused, vid. vindic. quæst. cap. 3, 4, 5, 6. And the ancient Doctors disputing against the Arriani, do join with him, who condemn all creature-worship as idolatrous, and particularly the adoration of Christ, if a creature, and therefore in so far as he is a creature: thus the Fathers convened in the Antiochian council. Ann. Dom. 271. do determine that Christ should be worshiped and adored *ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ σώματος φύσεως*, but not according to his corporeal and humane nature.

SECT. 2.

To whom ought we not pray? Not to Angels, Saints, or any other creature.

WE will not so far expatiate and enlarge this discourse, as to confute the fanatick dreams and delusions of, 1. *Pagans*, who did worship and invoke, not only their good and evil *Genius*, but also loathsome beasts; nor 2. these vile (rather monsters then) hereticks the *Satanici*, who worshiped the devil, not only that he might not tempt and vex them, but also as the procurer and author of much good; nor 3. the *Ophiss*, who worshiped the serpent by which *Eve* was deceived, as being the author of salvation.

O! let us rather labour to be thankful to God, that he hath not given us over to such strange delusions, then busie our selves in admiring and declaiming against such abjects, who being judicially plagued and deserted of God (because while they knew, or by the volumn of creation and providence, might have known him, they glorified him not as God) have fallen into such vain, and more then brutish imaginations. O! let us beware, lest if we like not to retain God in our knowledge, God give us (as he did them, *Rom. i. 28.*) over to a reprobate mind.

And were not Popery that large and over-reaching net, that now catcheth so many and great fish of the world, yea there, where the Gospel is preached and professed, we should no lesse reject their foolish and idolatrous way of worship, as being unworthy of refutation; for these superstitious wretches (being judicially blinded, and made (a) drunk with the wine of fornication of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters) have gone beyond many Pagans in their idolatry, and least they should appear to mince the matter, they have not spared the rule; but having first mutilated the first table of the decalogue (in diminishing the number of commandments belonging to it, and making the second to be but an appendix of the first) they have quite overturned that second commandment

(a) Rev. 17.
223.

mandment by their strange glosses and misinterpretations, while they tell us, that only the images of false Gods are there forbidden; that this precept is only ceremonial, and doth lay no obligation upon us Christians. But their idolatry hath not stayed in the *manner*, but doth extend also to the *object* of worship, for they have set up so many new gods and goddesses, to whom they have (b) dedicated their temples, and offer daily sacrifice of prayer and praises: Nay, in this they have exceeded the Athenians, the old Romans, and the most superstitious Heathens, who have lived in any age; and the Pope by his canonization, hath made more petty gods, than any of the Pagan nations did acknowledge; for in Popery, every Countrey, City, Family, yea, and person, hath his peculiar Saint and tutelar Angel, whom he doth worship and invoke; nay every state and condition, every disease and malady, every art and trade, hath its proper mediator and protector, to whom recourse is made for preventing and removing of the evil, and the giving continuance and increase of the good within their several spheres and dioceses; thus they have made *Gallus* their geese-god, *Wendelin* their sheep-god, *Eulogius* their horse-god, *Antonius* their swine-god, &c. *Rochus* their plague-physician and protector, *Appollonia* their tooth-ach doctrix, *John* a god of the Epilepsy, *Entropius* of the Hydropsy, and Dame *Catharine* is lady of the mid-wives, &c.

O! what matter of astonishment is it to consider, that these who profess the Gospel should be so far left of God, as thus to lick up the very dregs of Pagan superstition and idolatry; and that so many learned Rabbies should come to that height of impudence, not only to borrow from such, and learn of them their way of worship, but also to make use of those reasons and arguments, which blind heathens alledged for their manner of devotion; yea, and that after the Fathers (whose doctrine they would seem to own with so much care and zeal) had razed from the ground that foolish building. It were no hard task for one of ordinary parts and reading, to demonstrate from the writings of the primitive and most ancient Doctors of the Church, that the popish Saint-worship is

(b) *Costerus in Enchirid. cap. 9. yea and Bellar. de sanct. beat. lib. 1. cap. 12. grants that God hath reserved that kind of worship to himself alone. yet cap. 13. & lib. de cult. sanct. cap. 4. sect. 4. do contradict his former confession, and lay it down his position sacra domus non solum Deo sed etiam sanctis recte dedicantur & dedicantur. and concerning the worship and invocation of saints, vid. lib. 1. de sanct. beat. per totum, & alios passim.*

(c) *Vid. argument. Celf. apud Orig. sub. fin. lib. 7. & in. lib. 8. contra Celfum. & Ambros. in epist. ad Rom. cap. 1. (si auctor sit istius commentarii) hanc Ethnicorum stultitiam redarguentem, eorumque vanam excusationem.*

(d) *Prov. 17. 19.*

(e) *Thus Augustine (in Pl. 96. nobis 97.) brings in one of the Pagans excusing their idolatry, non illud colo, seu adoco quod video, sed servo ei quem non video, quis est iste? numen quoddam invisibile quod presidet illi simulacro. & c. vid. etiam. in Pl. 113. & Chrysost. in Eph. 5. Ham. 18.*

(f) *Vid. Euseb. lib. 15. de prep. evan. & August. in libris de civi. Dei.*

all one (*mutata nomine*, the name of *Saturn*, *Mars*, *Venus*, &c. being changed into *Francisco*, *Catharin*. &c.) with the Pagan multiplicity of gods, and that it doth stand upon the same foundation and pillars. They who will take a little view of (c) *Origen* and *Ambrose*, need go no further for making out this parallel: and if we will hearken to what Pagans say for themselves, and compare their writings with the popish; we need not run to an arbiter to give sentence: for as in (d) water, face answereth to face, so the pagan and popish way of worship; for albeit, the poor Pagans did worship many gods, yet they (e) acknowledged only one supream God, and though many of them did not know who he was, and what name to give him, yet they knew there was such an absolute majesty, whom they did fear and worship; and thus (as it were) with the Athenians, they did consecrate an altar to the unknown God, and through this blindness and ignorance, they fell into many strange apprehensions concerning this infinite Deity, and particularly to our purpose, they imagined it to be below this great God to take notice of sublunary affairs, and of matters which were not of great and publick concernment, and that he had committed the care of such things to some deputies and officers of trust, whom he had appointed to be the overseers and dispensators of these things that concern the souls of men, to whom they should have their recourse, as to inferior gods, who were more familiar and condescending, and who would not stand at such a distance from mortals, as being by nature nearer unto them, and so more compassionate and easie to be entreated; and thus thinking it too great boldness in them to make an immediate address to the great God, they made use of these inferior gods as mediators and patrons, by whom they might get their business dispatched, as having power and moyen with, and commission from the great God for that effect. And the Platonicks (who were the best refined, and most polished Pagans) did (f) constitute two sort of patrons, to whom they did run, and by whom, as mediators, their prayers might be presented to the great God; viz. their *Damones* or Angels, and their *Herons*, or the souls of the defunct; and is not this the

very

very popish doctrine? can one (g) egge be more like to another? If it be askt when; and by what steps did this pagan doctrine creep into the Church? *Ans.* Although idolatry was the epidemical disease of the Jewish Church; they were ready to worship the (b) host of heaven, the sun, moon and stars, and in their mad zeal to cause their children passe through the (i) fire to *Molech*, yet we (k) read not of their worshiping and invoking of Angels or Saints departed; yea even then, when they were on the declining band. And all the true Israelits did only have their recourse to God in Christ, disclaiming all other mediators and advocates, as being ignorant of them and their condition: We have their confession of faith, as to this article, *I sa. 63. 16. Doubtlesse thou art our father* (faith that Church to God) *though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not, thou, O Lord, art our father and redeemer.* But what now (since they were cut off and scattered among the nations) they professe or practise, cannot be so well known, nor is it needful to enquire; they being (l) now *Lo-ammi* and *Lo-ruhamah*, their carriage can be no precedent or rule to us: neither can it be imagined, that now they keep that uniformity in worship, which they observed, while they were united in one incorporation; and as to this particular, it would appear from *Philo* their great Rabbi, that not a few of them after their dispersion, were tainted with this leaven; for he being a Platonick, and having from his master (m) learned that point of divinity, he would not want followers amongst that people; who might also, from the nations amongst whom they lived, learn this lesson.

As for the Christian Church, many of them being lately converted from the heathenish superstition and idolatry, it would appear that they stood in some hazard to look back again to their former way of devotion; so that the Apostle had need to warn them (as he did the *Colossians*, *Col. 2. 18.*) *to beware, least any man beguile them in a voluntary* (or without warrant and command) *humility in worshiping of Angels*; and it would appear, that the heresie of the *Angelici* did then creep in, which shortly after (as (n) *Epiphanius* doth

(g) non ovum
ovo similius.

(b) 2 King
17. 16. 17.
(i) 2 King.
23. 10, 11
(k) Though
Papists run to
some apocry-
phal texts con-
trary to their
own concessi-
ons, as we shall
hear.

(l) H. f. 1. 6. 9.
(m) Vid. Phil.
Judæum lib.
de exortatione
sub finem, pag.
(mih) 194.

(n) Apud
August lib
de her. ad
Quodvultde-
um, heret. 39.
Angelici in
angelorum
cultum incli-
nati quos Epi-
phanus jam
omnino dese-
cisse testatur:
hæc August.
vid. Theodo-
ret. in Col. 2.
18. & Concil.
Laodic. can.
31. & Δε Χρ
σιν δὲ, &c.

doth witnesse) was universally disclaimed, and had none to own it. O! who can admire the impudence of Papists who acknowledging the Fathers and Councils to be a rule of faith, and yet read that heresie of Angel-worship and invocation so generally condemned by these, will notwithstanding lick up that venom and hold it out to their followers as a cordiall, and that upon the very ground (o) alledged by these old hereticks, and condemned by the Apostle, to wit, a pretended humility, in not daring to make an immediat addresse to God.

(o) *Vid. Theophil. in Col. 2. 18.*

(p) *Viz. of Angel-worship.*

But though some few did fall into that (p) error, yet its certain from Ecclesiastick history, that the Christian Church, for the space of some hundreth years, was kept free of creature-worship and invocation; all Churches and Incorporations condemning these few Angelick Hereticks. And as for the worship and invocation of Saints, or the souls of the defunct, it was not so much (for ought that can be known from history) as once named amongst Christians for the space of two hundred years and above; the Church for that time; being for the most part in the furnace, (one storme following upon the back of another, like the Waves of the sea) did retain her (q) virginity, and continued all that while a chaste spouse to Christ; and as in other things, so also in this; as she gave to him her heart, so also her outward service, worship and obedience: but after these stormes were over, and while under the reign of *Constantine* and other Christian Emperours, the world began to smile upon her, she began to gad after other lovers, and (as being ashamed of Christ and the simplicity of the Gospel) to deck her self with Ornaments of her own devising, till at length the mystery of iniquity came to its maturity, and a bill of divorcement must be put in the hand of the strumpet and great whore, so that she was no longer to be accounted a spouse.

(q) *Eusebius with Egiptus calls the Church a pure and chaste Virgin for the space of the first two hundred years. vid. Euf. hist. lib. 3: cap. 32.*

The popish Doctors apprehending it to be a great prejudice to their cause to have these first and purest times not only silent, and not to speak for them, but also to condemn and abominat their doctrine, as being the very dregs of Pagan superstition and idolatry, (though a little purified and refined

refined by subtle wits) they have adventured upon a strange remedy, (which to the intelligent, makes their disease to appear the worse and more desperat) they have, 1. dared to wrest, change, corrupt and expunge severall monuments of purest antiquity, and have been bold to publish to the view of the world their *indices expungatorii*; and as that had not been enough, they have, 2. without all modesty published their own late dreams, under the name of ancient Doctors; and thus have *fathered* upon them whom they call fathers, such *children* as were not conceived till some hundreth years after the death of their supposed parents; so that it is an usuall trick for Monks (as in another sense so also in this) to father their own children on other parents.

But when these covers could not hide their nakednesse, they confesse somerhing; but yet, like some impudent strumpets, they still plead not guilty; and they will give you reason for it, why they may play the harlot, though other women were chaste, and then least they should seem singular, they tell us that they want not companions; though others be more modest and will not avouch it, yet they are as guilty; for (r) 1. they will shew you why they may invocat the Saints, though the Jewish Church did not, and might not call upon them. 2. As for the Apostles and first founders of the Christian Church ye must believe that they did approve this Saint-invocation, but in modesty did conceal it, least they should be thought ambitious and to desire that they themselves after their death should be worshiped and invocated.

And thus Paul, least he should seem arrogant, must become a (s) liar, and make the elders of *Ephesus* witnesses of his lie, while he protesteth that he hath not shunned to declare unto them *all the counsel of God*, *Act. 20. 26, 27.* But as such groundlesse pretences shew the weaknesse of their plea, so this extorted confession, and concession doth clearly hold out the novelty of this Popish device, and that (as Christ said of the Jewish divorcement, *Mat. 19. 8.*) from the beginning it was not so.

The first who did lay a stone in this foundation, seemeth to be

(r) *Vid Eccium in Eucherio, Bellarm. de auct. beat. lib. 1. cap. 19. Suarez. in 3. Tom. 2. diff. 42. scilicet.*

(s) Thus his modesty must 1. make him unfaithfull in concealing his masters will, 2. a liar, in attesting and protesting that he had concealed nothing.

be *Origen* about the yeare 240; for overturning of which we need not run to the common answer, and put *Papists* in mind that his Doctrine hath alwayes been suspected, and that his greatest followers and admirers, when they could stand no longer to his defence, have been forced to confesse that his writings have been miserably adulterated by hereticks; so that much weight cannot be laid upon any testimony brought from thence. Yet let us hear how *Origen* doth plead their cause. O! (1) saith he, *It shall not be amisse to think that the Saints departed, have a care of our salvation, and that they help us by their prayers.* And (u) *Else where, Whether the Saints who have left their bodies and are now with Christ, do care and labour for us as the Angels who are employed in the ministry of our salvation, let this remain amongst the (x) hidden and secret mysteries of God, which are not to be committed to writing.* I would know what *Papists* can collect from these testimonies; Is there any orthodox Divine who will scruple to say as much? yea some have positively determined what he propounds as a mystery, and at the best but an Apocryphal tradition; what though the saints do pray for us? must we therefore make idols of them, and pray to them? I might (y) cite many passages where this learned man doth condemn and confute Saint-invocation as a pagan delusion.

But *Cyprian* about the year two hundred and fiftie, did advance this error a step further: for this holy man, supposing as certain what *Origen* had delivered with much hesitation, viz. that the Saints in glory did pray for us, though he was far from thinking, that we should therefore pray to them, yet he did (z) exhort the people of God, *that after their death they would remember one another, and that after they came to their fathers house they would not forget their brethren on earth, nor neglect to pray for them.* But the *Arrian* heretic (which a litle after *Cyprians* time began to spread it self) did so choke this seed, that for a considerable space it lay, as it were, dead and rotten; for, amongst the many arguments which the orthodox Doctors did bring

again

(1) Orig.
Hom. 3. in
Cant. & in Jos.
hom. 16,

(u) In Epist.
ad Rom. lib.
2. cap. 20

(x) Habeatur
hoc quoque in-
ter occultæ Dei,
nec chartis
committenda
mysteria.

(y) Vid. lib. 7.
cont. Cels. (sub
fin. & in lib.
8. & hom. 6.
in lib. Jcl. Na-
ve hom. 5. in
diversos & in
Epist. ad Rom.
lib. 8. cap. 10.
&c.

(z) Cyp. lib. 3.
epist. 18.

nich
isto
and
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And
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ebe
n to
able
the
rim
aind



(d) Naz.
oras. in *anath.*
pafcha.

(e) About
that time the
monastical
kind of life is
thought to
have its rise;
yea, some as-
firm that Basil
himself was
the first father
and inventor
of it amongst
Christians,
though not a
few do rather
think, that
Paul the The-
ban, was the
first that
practised it,
about the year
a 60. and that
Anthony did
first plead for
it, and per-
suade unto it,
anno, 300.

(f) See that
Council (as to
that particu-
lar) fully vin-
dicated by Dr.
Ulther, in his
answer to the
Jesuits chal-
lenge, pag.
480. &c.

(g) Chemniz
anam. conc.

Trid. in can. de invocat. Dr. Ulther loc. cit. pag. 428. &c. Forster, *instr. theol.* lib.
2. cap. 7, 28, 30. &c.

they might as well, yea, and did speak to inanimat creatures; So the same (d) *Naxianzen* to the Ordinance of the Pas-
s-over, *O great and holy Passtover, &c.* But though these
ancient Doctors may, and should thus, for the most part, be
interpreted, because (as we heard) they thus interpret them-
selves: yet it cannot be denied, that by this affected elo-
quence they laid snares, not only to simple (e) monks, but
also to themselves (which may serve for warning to all Mini-
sters not to seek after applause, and to please the ear with the
melodious sound of humane literature) for they afterwards,
forgetting these figures and elegancies, followed the letter,
properly invoking them, to whom at first they did speak
only by way of fiction and supposition; though they per-
formed that new piece of wil-worship alwaies with much
wavering and hesitation doubting both of its warrant and
successe.

Thus we have seen by what steps and authors, this idola-
trous worship did creep in, but as yet it durst not appear in
the day time, but was only received and entertained in a
clandestine way, and like stollen wares, which the referters
durst not avouch nor own: all this while it was only the pri-
vate opinion of some few Monks and private persons, and
was not generally received, nor approved by any Council for
a catholick and certain doctrine, but on the contrary, was
condemned by the (d) Council of *Laodicea*, and their own
Adrian, the Pope approved and retained that thirty fifth
article (which did condemn creature-worship as idolatrous)
in his epitome of the Canons, which long after he delivered
to *Charles* the great: And many ancient Fathers, from time
to time, did testifie against this abomination; yea, these who
are reputed to be the chief authors and promoters of it, have
once and again disowned and disclaimed it, as their writings
(notwithstanding of their late purgation by the popish
Doctors) can testify.

But we have too long insisted on the discovery of this in-
vention, and need add no more; especially since (g) *Chemni-*

ius, Vher and Forbess, have said enough for vindicating the truth and the first and purest times, from popish imputations; and we might to good purpose here set down Dr. (b) Forbess his twelve rules, which he bringeth for vindicating the Fathess, as being useful not only in this, but in several other controverted points of divinity. But that we may close this historical narration, its observable that the main, if not authors, yet owners and spreaders of this idolatrous invocation, were (as is thought) some women, and therefore its called by *Epiphanius*, the (i) *womans heresie*. And the first, who laboured to have the Saints publicly invocated in the publick prayers of the Church, was one *Peter* (k) *Gnaephens* a Fuller, who about the year 407. was condemned for an heretick by the fifth general Council.

You will say, but when was it generally received? *Ans.* Albeit, it were great arrogance in any one to affirm, that he had perused all the monuments of antiquity; yet since many (l) orthodox Divines, have long since put Papists to it, to shew them the least shadow of Saint-invocation in the first & purest times, and that to this day (so far as we have seen or heard) they have not been able to produce one testimony, or to make a reply that deserveth consideration; we may, upon this ground, together with positive evidences, from the most learned, judicious and most approved Fathers affirm, that albeit, 1. In the dayes of *Nazianzen*, there were several ground-stores brought for this work, to wit, the rhetorical Dialogues, and apostrophes to the defunct, which, 2. were afterwards laid by some foolish builders, yet with much doubting and hesitation; and 3. though some did call to the martyrs, yet they did not invocate them, they were (as (m) one speaketh) only *vocati*, not *invocati*, they were desired (as we do the living) to pray with us, but were not prayed unto. 4. Though some did call upon them, yet with some moderation, not pleading their merits, and only in their private devotion; Yet 5. till after the death of *Epiphanius* and *Augustine* (these two great opposers of this idolatrous invention) it came not to its height; but after a little while, it fell into the hands of some (n) Poets, who without all modesty, used a licentious

(b) *Ibid. cap.*
5.

(i) *in 7^{to} yov*
αἰων δια-
σις, *Epiphani.*
Heret. 79.

(k) *Vid.*
Chemn. loc.
cit. pag.

(mibi) 339.
& W. Per-
kins demonst.
probl. 2. vol.
pag. 529.

(l) Ulher,
Perkins,
Chennicius,
loc. cit.

(m) Ulher
loc. cit. pag.
444. and Geo.
Cassand. a
moderate Pa-
pist, thinks it

yet sufficient
only to present
our wishes and
desires to
them, and not
to pray to
them, satis est
si dicamus
per modum
desiderii eas
interpellatio-
nes explicari
posse, &c.
oper. pag.
1199. vid.
lib.

(n) Such as
Prudentius,
Paulinus Po-
etanus, &c.

liberty to passe all bounds; and by a strange kind of metamorphosis to make new gods and mediators of holy men and martyrs; but all this time it was kept, as it were, within doors, in the private or domestick worship, till about the year six hundred. For albeir, *Gnaphens* before that time essayed to have insert it into the publick Liturgies, yet he and his motion were rejected; that great work being reserved for *Gregory* the great, who, for that and his other superstitious conceits, may well be called *the grand innovator and father of superstition*: and then lastly, *Adrian* the third, about the year eight hundred eighty five, did put on the cop-stone, claiming to himself and his successors, the power of *Canonization*, and making Gods of men.

We need not stay long in confuting this dream, yea, one of its patrons, the learned *Swarez*, doth furnish us with an argument (confirmed by the authority of their master *Thomas*) in which we may rest, viz. *No religious act can without idolatry be terminated in the creature; But must only be directed to God; But prayer is a religious act: Ergo.* And before he brings this, he tells us, that the conclusion of it must be supposed as certain: You will then say, the controversie is at an end. O! but hearken and ye shall hear a limitation; its certain (saith he) that prayer under some consideration, as it belongeth to their *cultus latria*, doth only belong to God; but as it falls under *cultum dulia*, so it may be tendered to Saints. We will not now meddle with these strange terms; but, in a word, he grants, that prayer, as it is a religious act, cannot be made to any creature without grosse impiety; and thus he hath hit right; for their idolatrous Saint-invocation, being a most impious and idolatrous abomination, can be no religious performance, nor favour of piety and devotion.

1. We may argue thus, we must not call on him in whom we do not believe, *Rom. 10. 14.* But woe to him that believeth, or trusteth in any meer creature, and makes it his arme and city of refuge, *Jer. 17. 5.* Ergo. O saith *Beſarmine*, the Prophet *Jeremy* must be mistaken, for otherwise Saint-invocation must be disclaimed; for (q) *none can be said to*

(o) Religio-
nis virtus cir-
ca solum De-
um versatur
sed oratio est
proprius actus
religionis &c.
Swaz. loc. cit.
cap. 9. sect. 2.

(p) *Ibid. cap.*
7. & 8.

(q) Non po-
tuit sanctos in-
vocare qui suo
modo in eos
non credit &
in eis non spe-
rat. *Bell. de*
sanct. beat. lib.
2. cap. 20. sect.
ad primum.

call upon the Saints, who doth not in his own way trust and hope in them: But, thus saith the Lord, *curst be the man that trusteth in man*, under what pretence soever, for his heart must depart from the Lord: If any thing of it thus be let out towards the creatures, He will accept of none of it, He dow not away with a corriual.

You will say, they give God the first place, and they acknowledge him to be the first (r) author. Reply, Instruments and means must not share with the first author in what is due to him alone; while we use the creature, we must only *confide* and *trust* in God. Whatever we make an object of our faith, confidence, or hope, must be either an Idol or God; and the most vile Pagan idolater might run to this popish plea; for though they worshiped many inferiour gods, yet they acknowledged oaly one, viz. their great *Jupiter*, to be the first and chief author of all.

(r) *Primus
auctor bono-
rum.* Bell.
ibid.

As for the two texts *Bellarmino* citeth, the first, viz. *Gen.* 48. 16. It is most impertinently alledged, and it is as impertinently applied, viz. not to the present point of trusting in, but of calling upon, the Saints: and thus also he contradicteth himself, while he grants that the Saints were not invocated under the old Testament; and the text speaks only of the adoption of *Manassch* and *Ephraim*, to be accounted as *Jacobs* sons; and thus to become heads of two distinct Tribes; and now *Jacob*, by these words of his blessing performs what he said, *ver.* 5. As for the other place, we remie him to their own (s) *Cajetan*, who hath so much modesty as to blush at the popish glosse, and will not have the Saints there (viz. *Philem.* *ver.* 5.) to be named as the object, but as the (t) subject of faith; so that *Philemon* there is commended for that faith, which he had with all Saints, and not which he had in the Saints; but as to the genuine sense of the words, we rather close with *Theodoret*, viz. that the Apostle having named faith and love, doth assign to each of these its proper object, so that (u) faith must be terminated in the Lord *Jesus*; and love in the Saints.

(s) *Cajet. in
Philem.*

(t) *Fides re-
ferunt in
sanctos tan-
quam conser-
tes fidei.*

(u) *Yet here
there is an in-
version of or-
der, vid.*

ver. 2. These who teach for doctrines the commandments of men, do in vain worship God; *Mat.* 15. 9. Wo to such presumptuous

Calv. in loc.

presumptuous fools, what plea will they be able to bring, when it will be said to them (as it was said to that people, *I/a.* 1. 12.) *who required these things at your hand?* But the Scriptures hold out, 1. no warrant or command, as we shall hear the Papists anon confesse. 2. No promise or reward to such a performance; and 3. no threatening or punishment, for neglecting and slighting it; and 4. No example of holy men, who have performed it with successe and approbation; but on the contrary, when through ignorance and infirmity, and being under a surprisal, they have tendered but a little of their homage, and that worship they owe to God unto the creature, though never so eminent and excellent, though an Apostle or Angel, they have been admonished of, and rebuked for, their error, as *Act.* 10. 25, 26. *Rev.* 19. 10. and 22. 8, 9.

O! but may Saint-worshippers say, what is refused in modesty, should not therefore be denied or withheld. O! but hearken, and ye shall hear reason for their refusing, yea, and abominating that service and homage. O! saith (x) *Peter* to *Cornelius*, why wilt thou fall down at my feet? Ah! am not I a man, and wilt thou make an idol of me? and see thou do it not (saith the Angel to *John*) for I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren, worship not me but God. We may here admire (y) *Bellarmines* impudency in pleading *Johns* practice as a rule and ground for ours; *Whether* (saith (z) he) *did John or the Calvinists best know if Angels should be worshiped?* And *wherefore are we reprehended for doing what John did?* *Ans.* Because *John* himself is reprehended, and who knowing what he saith, would affirm that we should practise what is condemned in him, and make that for which he was rebuked a rule whereby we should walk. Albeit *Balaams* asse, when she saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way, turned aside; yet these men, though they hear an Angel from heaven crossing their way, and calling to them to halt, they will notwithstanding drive on and go forward. Its true, *John* was the Disciple whom Christ loved, and an eminent Saint, but not free of sin, untill by death, he was freed of the body of sin and death, which was derived

(x) *What Peter abominates while he was on earth, he will not accept while he is in heaven, until the reason be used prove null, and he leave off to be a man, or fellow-creature with us.*

(y) *Bell. de sancti. beat. lib. 1. cap. 14. sect. ad 4. disc.*

(z) *num melius Johanne norunt Calvini? &c.*

derived to him from the first *Adam*, he was subject to mistakes, failings and infirmities: and whether shall we think that *John*, or the Angel, was in an error? for both could not be right, there being such an opposition; the Angel condemning what the Apostle practiseth, and holding out a reason for his reproof; and *John* relapsing into the same fault, is a further proof of his weakness, while he was surprised with the glorious appearance of the Angel; but it no ways helps *Bel-larmin's* cause: But the Angels renewed reproof, is a new confirmation of his error; for though, *Mala non sunt bis facienda*; yet *pulchra & vera sunt bis dicenda, eoque magis observanda*. The oftner an evil is committed, it is the worse; but the oftner a truth is inculcated, it should be the more heeded and observed. Then, while Papists shall be able, 1. to convince us, that they know better how to entertain Saints and Angels, then they themselves know how they should be used by us; yea, 2. While they shall make good, that the holy Angels can dissemble, and, like men, in their vain complements, refuse what is due to them, and bring a lye to back their complement; and, 3. Till they can prove that their canonized Saints are not yet (*a*) men, their fellow-servants and creatures, they must have us excused if we challenge them of ido'atry, while they give the worship which is due to God unto the work of his hands.

3. (*b*) We should only pray to him, who is, 1. *omnipotent* and able to save and deliver, and to do (*c*) exceeding abundantly, above all that we can think or ask; 2. *Omnipresent*, and alwaies at hand, who is not on a journey (as (*d*) *Eliab* mockingly said of *Baal*, while his Priests were crying unto him) and far from home when we knock; 3. *Omniscient*, and knows the very (*e*) thoughts and desires of our hearts, he must know our wants and hear our cries and complaint, he must not be a sleep, or diverted by talking with some other petitioner; so that like *Baal's* Priests, we should cry aloud to awaken him, or wait till he be at leisure to hearken to us: but there is only one Omnipotent, to whom all things are possible, *Adas. 19. 26* One who is omni-present, from whose presence we cannot flee, run where we will, *Pf. 139. 7, 8, 9.*

(a) Accord-
ing to that
usual synec-
doche totius
pro parte, the
soul (as being
the nobler
part) gets the
denomination
of the whole.
(b) *Arg. 3.*
(c) *Eph. 3. 10.*
(d) 1 King.
18. 27.
(e) 1 King.
8. 39.

And

And only he is omniscient, from whose eyes nothing is hid, and he it is (and he only) with whom we have to do, *Heb.* 4. 12. *Ergo.* Albeit Papists dare not so impudently blaspheme, as to ascribe any of these divine attributes to the creature, yet (say they) the Saints in glory have power with God, and he hath put in their hands the dispensation of mercies, and by beholding his face, they see there, as in a glasse, though not all things whatsoever, yet what concerneth them, and is pertinent to them to know, and thus they must know and hear when we pray unto them. *Ans.* Yet Scripture holds forth the ministry of Angels, *Heb.* 1. 14. but it doth not speak of any such ministry committed to the Saints after their removal; but supposing it were so, should we therefore rob the master, and give to his servant that honour and glory, that is due to him alone? *I am the Lord* (saith the holy one) *that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images, Isa.* 42. 8. Idolatry in the Word, is frequently called whoredome: now it were a poor plea for the whorish wife to say to her husband, ye sent your servant to wait upon me, and minister unto me; or, I knew such a one to be your friend and have moyen with you, and why might I not then use him as my husband? since ye loved him, why might I not deal kindly with him for your sake? And should not the honest servant, if tempted by an impudent woman, say with (f) *Joseph*, my kind master hath committed (g) all to my hand, neither hath he kept back any thing (in that he hath given me himself) except his glory, how then can I do this great wickedness to rob him thereof? We heard how *Peter* and the Angel would not, durst not rob him thereof; and how zealously did *Bar-nabas* and *Paul* protest against their madness, who would have sacrificed unto them? And little know these deluded creatures with what (h) indignation the holy Angels and the spirits of just men, do abhor these spiritual sacrifices of prayers and praises, which deluded idolaters do offer up unto them.

As for that glasse of the trinity, in which they imagine the Saints to behold all things that concern them, and so what

prayer

(f) *Genes.*

39. 8, 9.

(g) *Qui habet habentem omnia, habet omnia.*

(h) *Nemo dicat, timeo ne irascatur mihi angelus, si non illum colo, quia tibi irascatur quando illum colere voveris; bonus est enim et Deum amare &c.*

August. in *Pl.* 96.

prayers are offered up unto them; many Papists, long since, have dasht it in pieces, as being ashamed of such a groundless invention; So *Scotus*, *Bonaventura*, *Gabriel*, *Ocham*, and (i) others, whom the Jesuit *Becan* citeth and followeth; to which we may add *Henricum Gandavensis*, *quodl. 6. art. 4.* (whom (k) *Bannez* will have the first who removed the black from the back of that glass) and our learned Countryman, *Joh. Major*, in *4. sent. dist. 49. quest. 5.* So that (l) *Didacus Alvarez* hath wronged himself, while he would abuse the reader in making him believe that all Theologs, with *Thom. 1. part. quest. 12. art. 6.* (but as he hath mistaken the thing, so also, he or the Printer, the figure; for in that sixth article, *Thomas* speaketh not one word to that question, but *art. 8.*) do teach, that the Saints, by beholding of God, do (=) see in him all things that belong to their state.

You will say, what prospect have they who reject this glass, found for the Saints to look down from heaven to earth? *Ans.* *Martin(n) Becan*, for healing the wound he had made, bringeth three sorts of plasters (not knowing any thing on which he could rely) 1. The report of those who daily come from earth; (as if the dead, after their arrival in heaven, made it their work to shew to their brethren what was doing on earth when they removed from it.) 2. The relation of Angels; as if these ministring Spirits, for the heirs of salvation, did minister unto them after they were brought home to their Fathers house; they are indeed *Διευρυμα πνευματα*, but *Να τας μελλοντας αληθευουσιν σωτηριαν*; they are ministring Spirits to them who shall be (not to these who already are) heirs and inheritors of salvation, *Heb. 1. 14.* 3. Revelation from God, as if the Lord did say unto them, pity such and such a man, for he prayeth unto you; but will not the Lord rather pity and shew mercy of himself then wait upon, and thus, as it were, deal with others, that they may deal with him for that effect? And then I would ask,

(i) *Quasi simpliciter illud comenium rejicere affirmat (inter quos enumerat ipsum Thomam)* *sect. 9. & omnes Thomistas* *sect. 14. & omnes Theologos*, *sect. 15. ex quorum placitis argumentatur contra hoc fictitium (speculum)* *Mart. Becan. theol. schol. part. 1. tract. 1. cap. 9. q. 13.* (k) *Dom. Bannez in 1. tom. 1. ad quest. 122. art. 8.* (l) *Quilibet beatus videt in verbo (hoc est, in essentia divina) tanquam obiecto cognito, ut explicatur ab aliis, ea omnia quae pertinent ad suum statum, ut docent communiter omnes theologi cum S. Tho.*

art. 6. hac Alvar. in 3. quest. 10. art. 3. disp. 15. § 11. (m) Resp. Calvin. in 1. Cor. 13. 8. imaginantur (inquit) Papista, sanctos ex reflexo lumine quod habent ex conspectu Dei videre solum mundum, sed profanum est figmentum & prorsus gentilissimum quod & Aegyptiacam Theologiam magis recipit quam Christiana philosophia conveniat, &c. (n) Becan. loc. cit.

what wa'r and they can produce for such a revelation? and how they came to know it before it was revealed unto them? and whether it be an extraordinary dispensation or not? whether the Lord maketh such a revelation to the Saints immediately, or by some signes and instruments? and what these are, &c. (o) Bellarmine finding himself at a loss here, having alledged four opinions of the Roman Rabbies, he leaveth the question with this uncertain determination, that one of these four, (*viz.* that dream of the glass of the Trinity) is most probable; and another, (*viz.* the last of *Becons* subterfuges concerning divine revelation) is more fit and efficacious for convincing of hereticks, and that the other two are not satisfactory.

(o) Bell. de
sanct. beat. lib.
1. cap. 20.

We may fitly here alledge *Erasmus*, his pithy Sarcasme, as being more pertinent then Arguments, while we have to deal with such obstinat adversaries. *There was one* (saith (p) he) *who in the time of a storm, being in great danger, and seeing every one to run to his tutelar Angel, reasoned thus with himself, If I should now call upon our Nicholaus, (to whom the care of Sea-men is committed) perhaps he will not hear me, and is ignorant of my hazard; and though he know my condition and hear what I say, yet, what know I but he may be so busied and taken up with the complaints of others, that he hath no leisure to help me; therefore he resolves to take the surest and shortest cut, and immediately to run to God in Christ, who is able and willing to pity us, and who hath commanded us to call on him in the day of trouble, and promised to deliver us, Ps. 50. 15. Surely, that* (q) *Nobleman that was with George, Duke of Saxony, at the time of his death, did rightly determine the controversie that was among the Moncks; some counselling him to pray to Mary, some that he would pray to the Angels, others to this and that Saint: O I saith this Nobleman, your Highness, as to civil and politick affairs, used alwayes to say, that the straight way was the shortest and best; wherefore then suffer ye your self to be misled, by looking after these Mzanders, these crooked and by-ways? and do not rather directly run to God in Christ, who is able and ready to help all these that come unto him.*

(p) Apud
Chemn. loc.
cit. pag. (mibi)
296.

(q) Vid Chem.
ibid.

4. We must pray in faith, nothing wavering, *Jam. I. 6. Arg. 4.*

But Papists cannot pray to Saints in faith, they must waver and doubt, 1. of their warrant; for there is no such thing enjoyed in the Word, as we shall hear themselves confess; *O but, saith the Lord, What thing soever I command you, observe to do it, thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it, Deut. 12. 32. Thou must* (saith (r) Austin) *so worship* (r) August. *God, as he hath prescribed; and if thou pray otherwise then* de consens. *he hath taught thee, thou offerest to him the sacrifice of a fool,* evang. 1. 1. *thou must not make thy reason a rule for his service.* Deum sic colere oportet quomodo seipsum colendum esse praecepit-orare aliter quam Dominus docuit, non ignorantia solum sed culpa est, quare honorandus esse non intelligitur nisi ipse docueris honorandum, dei bonorem per Deum docemur, non est de Deo humani iudicii sentiendum, Aug. de trin. lib. 5. (l) Cajet. tract. de indulg. Canus lib. 5. cap. 5. Joan. Pic. Mirand. apolog. quast. 7.

2. They must doubt, whether these new patrons will accept of that piece of homage from their hands, since in the Scriptures we read of none, who would thus suffer their master to be robbed of his glory. 3. They must waver and doubt, concerning the state of those to whom they pray, whether they be in hell or heaven; thus their Rabbies, (s) *Cajetan, Canus, Mirandula, &c.* have confessed, that the Pope may erre in the canonization of Saints; and *Bellarmino* himself grants, that the histories of some of their canonized Saints are apocryphal and uncertain; yea, saith (r) *Mirandula*, we should as well believe the Church when it passeth a sentence of condemnation, as in its canonization of Saints; But we are not (as *Thomas* saith) to believe that these are in glory, which the Church hath canonized for Saints (and shall we pray to these, who are in hell and dare not pray for themselves?) yea, we may upon good grounds question if ever there were such men and women in the world, as some of their deified Saints, such as *St. Christopher, St. George, St. Catharin, &c.*

4. They must also waver and hesitate, to whom of the Saints rather then to others, they should have their recourse, they have made unto themselves so many Patrons and Advo-

Bell. loc. cit. & respondeo sanctorum. (c) Tanta est fides adhibenda ecclesiae in damnatione alicujus quanta est adhibenda in canonizatione sanctorum; sed dicit, Thom. ult. art. quodl. 9. quod sanctos canonizatos ab ecclesia non tenemur de necessitate fidei credere esse in gloria; fundamentum Thomae est quia in his tantum tenemur de necessitate salutis ecclesiae credere quae ad substantiam fidei pertinent. Mirand. loc. cit. sub finem quast. fol. (mihi) 55. vid. etiam fol. 51.

(u) Ribadi-
neira in *visa*
Borg.

(x) Lorin, in
i. *AR.*

cata that they know not whom to employ ; and therefore
(u) *Franciscus Borgia* did appoint, that that controversie
should every moneth be determined by lot, which custome
is punctually observed by the Jesuits, who (as (x) *Lorinus*
testifieth) from moneth to moneth by lot make choice of new
gods and patrons, and others throw the dyce and make it
decide the question.

5. They must doubt, whether, 1. their patron they have
chosen doth hear and take notice of them ; whether, 2. he be
otherwise employed in dispatching business for those who
have prevented them, and have more moyen with him ;
whether, 3. he hath gotten a commission to be their guardian,
and if he will intrude himself on that office without a call from
his master, &c.

Arg. 5.

(y) *Mat. 6. 9.*

Luk. 11. 2.

(z) *Quod co-
lis summus An-
gelus id colen-
dum ab domine
ultimo Tertul.
advers. Marci-
on, lib. 4.*

5. That perfect pattern of prayer which Christ did teach
his Disciples and hath left on (y) record for our copy, doth
shew us to whom we should direct our prayers ; viz. only
to our heavenly Father, and to whom we must ascribe the
Kingdom, Power and Glory. The meanest man and the great-
est Angel (saith (z) *Tertullian*) have one and the same ob-
ject of worship. Our King stands not in need of a deputy,
all his subjects may make an immediat addresse to him in
Christ.

Bellarmino answereth, 1. That according to this pattern
we must neither invocat the Son nor holy Ghost, but only the
Father. *Repl.* By what reason can *Bellarmino* prove that the
Father there is taken, *personally* for the first
person of the Trinity, and not *essentially*, essentially as it is com-
mon to all the persons in the Trinity ? 2. Supposing that it
were there taken personally, yet his inference is naught,
and doth not beseech the learning of so great a Doctor ; but
I should rather think that he goeth against his own light,
while he argueth against the rule acknowledged by (a) him-
self and all orthodox Divines in their disputes against the Ar-
rians, (viz. that when one of the persons of the blessed Tri-
nity is named in reference to the creatures, (yea though
there were an exclusive particle added, yet) the other two must
not be excluded. 2. He *Ans.* that Christ there did not teach his

(a) *De Christo*
lib. 2, cap. 17.
176.

Disciples

Disciples to whom, but for what they should pray. *Reply*, 1.

Then that Pattern must not be perfect. 2. Why did Christ suppress that which was most materiall? for there is greater hazard in mistaking the one way then the other. But he answereth, that the Disciples did well know, that God, yea and only God, should be invocated as the first author of all good. *Reply*, But why doth he add that limitation? it is contrary to his own confession; for before that time the Saints were not at all invocated; because (saith (b) he) they were then kept in a prison of hell viz. in *limbo patrum*, and therefore neither did the Disciples desire, nor Christ prescribe a directory for worshipping of any creature; and therefore Saint-invocation must be a popish anti-scripturall invention.

(b) *Quod illi ad huc inferni carceribus clausi deservierunt* Bell, ord. *dis. de beat. & canoniz.*

Before the time of the (c) Reformation, there was a great debate in the University of St. *Andrews*, whether the *Pater noster* should be said to the saints; and after much dispute a simple fellow was judged to give a wiser decision of the question then all the Doctors with their distinctions. O! (said he to the Sub-prior) Sir, *To whom should the Pater noster be said but to God only? give the saints aves and creeds enow in the devils name* (so he after his rude way of speech) *for that may suffice them.* But (d) *Bellarmino* condemneth those learned Fathers, and all others who say the *Pater noster* to any creature, as simple and stupid; yet it may be questioned, whether the Popish cause doth ow more to him for disallowing that vile prostitution of the name of God, his kingdom, power and works to the creature; or to them who are loath to disclaim that pattern of prayer, which our blessed Lord hath left on record for our use till he come again?

(c) *Anno 1550. See postw. dist. Ch. Scot pag. 91.*

(d) *Bell. loc. cit cap. 10. §. 6. ibid.*

6. Why should we stay to multiplie arguments, while we have to do with those who profess the name of Christ? Its long since he told the devil and all his emissaries, *that we should worship the Lord our God, and Only serve him, Mat. 4. v. 10.* This stoppt the devils mouth, v. 11. but yet his factors will not be silent; but will tell you of a *dulia* and *latria*, which in scripture do signifie one and the same thing; and looking to the Erymon and common use of the words, their

Arg 6.

(c) Bell. loc.
ii, c. 2p. 12.

(f) Azor, in-
stis. moral. tom
1. lib. 94 cap.
10.
Arg. 7.

their *Dulia*, which they give to Saints, doth import more servitude, reverence and subjection then their *Latria*; which they allow to God; and therefore, (e) *Bellarminus* had reason to confesse this their appropriation of these termes to be apocryphall, and to have been excogitated in their Scholes, (which have been a very nursery and seminary of superstition and idolatry) to be a cloak to cover their apostasie, yea, in the preface to that disput, he grants that Saint-invocation is *eximium adorationis genus*. And (f) *Azorius* saith, that the Saints are to be worshiped *Divinò cultu & honore, qui est religionis actus*. And did ever any pagan go a greater length? What can be given more to God then they allow to the poor creature? for what use then serveth their distinction of *Dulia* and *Latria*?

7. While Papists look on these Scriptures, *Lev. 17. 7, Dent. 32. 17, Psa. 106. 37. 1 Cor. 10. 20*. How should they tremble, be amazed and confounded at their creature-worship and invocation? We do not read in all the Scriptures, that the Israelits at any time, professedly and purposely, did worship the devil; yea there were but a few of the Gentiles, and these most rude and barbarous so far demented. O! but saith the Lord (in the places cited) both of the Jewes and of all the Gentiles, the most sober and intelligent who did worship any other but God, *they worshiped and sacrificed to devils*. If thou make an idol of the creature, whatever that creature be in it self, though very good and excellent, yet it becometh a devil unto thee, though the Jewes and Gentils might have made use of the same plea which Papists run to: we have seen how Pagans take them to that same city of refuge, and that the idolatrous Israelits did cover themselves with the same mantle, we need not question, while they worshiped the host of Heaven and sacrificed to the Queen of Heaven, yet they did not forget the King of Heaven. Thus after they had chosen new Gods, and Aaron had said of the golden calf, *These be thy Gods, O Israel*; yet he immediately subjoyneth *to morrow is a feast to the Lord*, *Exod. 32. 5*. though *Jeroboam* said of the calves he had made, *Behold thy Gods, O Israel*, *1 King. 12. 28*. yet he still

acknowledged

acknowledged the true and great God; therefore he desired the man of God to pray to God for him, *Ch. 13. 6.* and sent to *Ahijah* the Prophet of the true God, *Ch. 14. 2.* But why do I insist on particulars, we have the manner of worship of all Idolaters, whether Pagans or Israelites, set down *2 King. 17. 33. 41. &c.* They fear the Lord and serve their own gods, they would give to the great God the first place, and mainly fear and reverence him, though they would allow to their inferiour gods and patrons, some inferiour piece of service and worship. But both they and Papists are in a grosse mistake, while they estimate prayer to be an inferiour part of worship; yea, it is such an eminent part of it, that sometimes to shew its excellency, its put for the whole worship of God, as *Gen. 4. 26. Ps. 79. 6. Jer. 10. 25. Isa. 64. 7.* and thus also the place of Gods worship, is called *the house of prayer, Isa. 56. 7. Mat. 21. 13.* Yea, (g) *Thomas* granteth, that its most certain that prayer is a religious act; and all the (b) School-men confesse, that Religion hath God only for its object, to which it must be directed. And I would ask of Papists, 1. where they do read any description of prayer in any Divine, till these last and idolatrous dayes, in which there is mention of any other object of invocation but God alone? And, 2. I would know what are these affections, which they exercise and pour out in their prayers to God, which they do not imploy (yea, as to the measure and degree) in their prayers to the Saints? Nay, we shall hear, how they do more reverence and religiously worship the creatures, then the infinit Creator. And (i) *Bellarmino*, notwithstanding of all the fig-leaves he gathereth to cover the nakedness of the whorish Church, yet is forced to confesse, in the very Porch to the dispute, that Saint-invocation is a notable and eminent kind of worship. And must it not then be as evident as the Sun to shine, that Papists are egregious idolaters?

And then, 7. Prayer, according to the Scripture phrase, *Mat. 1. 11. Ps. 141. 2. Rev. 8. 3, 4.* by Divines, ancient and modern, is called a *Sacrifice*; and the Apostle giveth it a distinguishing epithet, for discriminating it from the Levitical Oblation, while he calls it a *spiritual sacrifice*, *1 Pet. 2. 5.*

And

(g) Thom.
2. 2. q. 83.

art. 3. con-
clus. art. ma-
nifestum est
quod est pro-
pria religionis
actus.

(h) Vid.
Thom., ibid.
Quaest. 81.
art. 1, 2, 3.

(i) Est eximi-
um adorationis
genus.
Bell. or.
disp. de be.
& Canoniz.
vid. Azor.
in 1. moral.
tom. 1. lib. 9
cap. 10.

Arg. 7.

(k) *Sacrificium verum non est quod ex ar. est, sed quod ex corde profertur, nec quod manu sed quod mente libatur.*

La. Cant. de epis. Dei cap. 2.

Arg. 8.

(l) *Thom. 2.2. quest. 87. art. 3. orando tradis hominem mentem suam Deo, quam ei per reverentiam subicis et quodammodo praesentas.*

And yet he makes it the subject of the following article, to shew, that we should pray to the Saints.

(m) *Mat. 11. 28.*

And so it must be more noble and excellent, then these outward and material offerings. *It is not* (k) *one* a true sacrifice, which is brought from the coffer or herd, but which proceedeth from the heart; not that which is offered by the hand, but by the mind and soul. But it was alwayes unlawful to offer sacrifice unto any, but to the true and living God: and therefore it must be unlawful to pray to any but to him. And (t) *Thomas* well proveth, that it must be so; because in prayer, we offer up our heart and soul, and professe our reverence and subjection to him to whom we pray: But it were vile idolatry to offer up our heart, and to professe the subjection of our souls to any creature; and therefore it must be a strange abomination to pray to any creature.

8. O I that blind Papists would remember, that we have an advocate with the Father, who stands not in need of deputies under him, or of agents to put him in mind of his clients plea, 1 *Job. 2. 1. Heb. 7. 25.* He cannot be so diverted, or taken up with the multitude of clients and causes, as to forget or slight thee, he will not send thee to another, he cannot, he will not reject any who come unto him; he hath such bowels towards his supplicants, and is so touched with the feeling of their infirmities, that they need not fear their cause shall miscarry in his hands, *Job. 6. 37. Heb. 4. 15.* O I let us then hearken to the exhortation, *ver. 16.* Let us in him come boldly to the throne of grace. And woe to those deluded creatures, who run to other advocates and patrons; is he not as ready to undertake for thee, as when he invited (m) all those, who were heavy laden and weary to come unto him? Can he weary of employment, who is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, *Heb. 13. 8?* and who ever liveth to plead his peoples cause, and interceed for them, *Heb. 7. 25, 24?* In the outward Court and Tabernacle the whole congregation might pray, but none might enter into the Holy of Holies, but the high Priest with blood, *Heb. 9. 6, 7.* All Saints may joyn on earth in this lower and outer Court; but in the heavens, that Holy of holies, only our high Priest appeareth for us, presenting our sacrifices, and mingling his blood (that excellent perfume) therewith, *Heb. 6. 20.*

But

But Papists would cloak the matter with a distinction between a Mediator of *intercession* and a Mediator of *redemption*; and they say they do not wrong Christ, while they substitute many intercessors, since they only acknowledge him to be the Redeemer. *Repl.* But if we believe the Scriptures, then we must grant, that as there is but one God, so there is but one Mediator between God and man, to intercede with God for man; to wit, the man Christ Jesus, (n) 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. Heb. 9. 15. Where also we have the ground of his mediation; from which we may argue thus, 1. None can be a Mediator to intercede for sinners, but he who hath offered himself a ranfome for sin; but no Angel or man did, or was able to pay a farthing of our debt. *Ergo.* 2. He who is our Patron and Advocate, must be able in point of law and justice to carry our cause, and so he must be (according to the Apostles inference, 1 Job. 1. 2.) the propitiation for our sins, but Christ is the alone propitiation, and therefore the sole advocate of sinners. It was well said by (o) *Augustin*, He for whom none intercedeth, but he for all, must be the alone and true Mediator. But such is (p) *Bellarmines*, rather impudence then ingenuous confidence, that he dare cite this passage for clearing one of his distinctions: But yet he is pleased to take notice of *Calvins* abuse (as he would make us believe) of that place: yet in effect saith nothing to that, which mainly striketh at the root of Saint-invocation, viz. that Christ is the alone and true Mediator, and therefore all other mediators, to whom we offer our prayers, must be so many empty shadows and lying waters, which will not refresh the weary passenger. And the following words (which *Bellarmines* either hath not been at the pains to read and ponder, or else of purpose passeth over) will sufficiently vindicate *Augustine* from the popish false glosses; for, saith he, *Nam si esset mediator Paulus, essent unque & ceteri co-apostoli ejus, ac sic multi Mediatores essent, nec ipsi Paulo constaret ratio qua dixerat, unus enim Deus, unus Mediator Dei & hominum, homo Christus Jesus*, Aug. loc. cit. But as redemption and intercession must not be separated in the Mediator, neither have the authors of that distinction separated

(n) It is observable that the Apostle here, while he speaketh of prayer, excludes the mediation of all others, as Calvin well observeth, atque horum quoque insufficiatam coarguit loci circumstantia quandoquidem hic de precibus expresso tractatur, Calvin in 1 Tim. 2. 5. (o) Pro quo autem nullus interpellat (scilicet) ipse pro omnibus, hic unus verusque mediator est Aug. lib. 2. cons. Parm. cap. 8. (p) Bell. loc. cit. cap. 20. § hanc rationem securus est B. Augustinus.

(q) *Vid. Calvin in 1 Tim. 2: 5.*

(r) *Chem. exam. Conc. Trid. part. 3. in decr. de invocat. See also Dr. Usher loc. cit.*

(s) *Psalter B. Mari virg. Pf. 18. Pf. 17. Pf. 30. &c.*

(t) *Let us hear Calvin who was better acquainted with their practice when we who live at such a distance. Quod Satan sub papatu eiusque perduxit ut vix millesimus quisque mediator*

Christum vel titulo tenus agnosceret — ita illis nomen est invisum ut si quispiam Christi Mediatoris faciat mentionem præteritis sanctis mox suspicione gravetur hæresios Calvin. in 1 Tim. 2: 5.

rated these in their practice, but to whom they have run as unto to intercessors, to them they have leaned as unto (q) Redeemers. Thus in their Litanies and forms of prayer, and particularly in *Mary* her Psalter, published to the view of the world, they call to the Saints as authors and procurers of mercies spiritual and temporal. O! what blasphemy hath been vented in their blind zeal towards these strange gods? The learned (r) *Chemists* hath set down a large catalogue of this kind of abomination and impudent idolatry, especially in their supplications to the virgin *Mary*, in which they call her *the queen of heaven, the mother of mercy, their hope, life, refuge, strength, &c.* and in her Psalter they have ascribed to her, what was said by the Prophet in the Psalms, for proclaiming the glory and majesty of God, *viz. that (s) the heavens declare her glory; In thee, O Lady, have I put my trust, let me never be confounded; save me, Lady, by thy name; O come, let us sing unto our queen that brings salvation, her mercy endureth for ever; except our Lady build the house of our heart, the building will not continue, &c.* Be astonished, O ye heavens, and be confounded, O ye earth, (who to this day declare the glory of your Maker) to see the sons of men (for whose use ye were made) thus to dishonour their Master, and to give his glory to the poor creature. If their set forms compiled by the learned, be laden with such stuffe, what must then the licentious liberty be, which the rude (t) multitude takes to themselves at their private devotion? And albeit *Bellarmino, Suarez* and others, dare not own these execrable blasphemies in point of dispute, yet take their best refined speculations, and view them narrowly, and they shall appear to be nothing else but a nursery of such abominations; and though in their debates, they will not (because they cannot) defend, yet who is he amongst them that freely rebukes, or takes pains to remedy this evil, though so publickly and frequently committed?

Yea not only their Postillators, with the rable of their ignorant and blind preachers, but their most learned and subtle Rabbies do lay the foundation for such a superstructure; their (u) Lombard, Thomas, Scotus, Summa Tabiena, Belarmine, Vasquez, Suarez, Valentia, Bannez, Becanus, &c. do maintain and plead, that the Saints by their merits do obtain, and thus with their money purchase an answer to our prayers. I needed not have named any for this, it being the doctrine of all the popish Clergy; who of them have written on this subject, who doth not make the merits of the Saints the ground of Saint-invocation? According to their (x) masters doctrine, *Orationem porrigimus sanctis ut eorum precibus ac meritis orationes nostra sortiantur effectum*, We pray to the Saints (saith Aquinas) that through their prayers and merits we may be heard, and obtain a return of our prayers. Yet the Fathers of the (y) Council of Trent judged it safest to suppress this ground in their Canon about Saint-worship and invocation. And thus its evident that the popish Church hath made their canonized Saints their mediators not only of intercession, but also of redemption, upon whose purchase and merits they rely for a return to their prayers: So that in these creature-worshippers, is verified what our blessed Redeemer said, *Mat. 6. 24.* that no man can serve two masters, unless he rob the one of his due, and that they who commit one evil in hewing out (with that people, *Jer. 2. 13.*) broken Cisterns that can hold no water, will add the second evil, and also with them forsake the true fountain of living waters. For since Papists began to worship the creature, and make it their city of refuge, they have proceeded from one step to another, till (z) *Jesurun*-like they have lightly esteemed, and kicked at the rock of their salvation. Its long since (a) Bodin ingeniously acknowledged and complained of this madness. *That St. Anthony by many in Italy and France was more feared, and zealously worshiped then the immortal God.* And (b) *quam Deus immortalis.* (b) *Cast. cons. cr. 21. quidam homines non mali certos sibi sanctos tanquam patronos deligunt inque eorum meritis & intercessione plus quam in Christi merito fiduciam ponunt.*

(u) Magist. *(sent. lib. 4. dist. 45. Scot. ibid. q. 4. Thom 2.2. quæst. 83. art. 4. in corp. Summa Tab. 3. orare Belarm. de sanct. beat. lib. 1. cap. 20. Suarez. loc. cit. lib. 1. de or. cap. 100. § 12. &c.* I might here fill some pages with citations. (x) Thom. loc. jam cita. 10. (y) *Vid. decret. publicanum, sess. ult. die 3. Dec. 1563. de pur. invoc. &c.* (z) *Deut. 32. 15.* (a) Bodin in *method. hist. cap. 5. pag. 100.* S. Antonius a plebisque in Italia & Gallia Narbonensi ardentiori voto certe majori metu colitur

(c) Vives in
lib. 8 August.
de civit. Dei
cap. 17.
(d) Biel in
canone. Mis.
lect. 30.

Cassander grants, That some well meaning men, having chosen some Saints to be their patrones, do trust more in their merits and intercession then Christs. And (c) Vives lamenteth, that many are come to that height of Idolatry, that they worship their he and she Saints no other wise then God himself. Nay saith (d) Biel, many of us are often more affected towards Saints, then towards God. And Jacobus de Valentia is not ashamed to professe, that there is no other refuge left for us in this our pilgrimage, but to run to the mediatrix the virgin Mary. I might easily add to these: But any who will look on their psalms and hymns on the virgin Mary, and on their prayers to the Saints (though digested and published in print) shall find there no more mention of God, and no petition in any of these put up to him, more then to the devil. And thus they have dealt worse with the great God, then Pagans did with their Jupiter: And (e) Vives confesseth, that he could see little difference between their opinion of, and carriage towards the Saints, and the vilest heathens estimation of their gods.

(e) loc. cit,

As for the Mediator, there be three things which in a special maner proclaim his glory, and declare his admirable love towards the sons of men; and they have robbed him of all these. 1. His bowels and tenderness, his compassion towards and his readiness to welcome and receive all weary and humbled sinners; and that his pity and love to lost ones is such, that he prevents them with his loving invitations, and becometh the first seeker; that he will not take a repulse, but will draw in all his ransomed ones, and pull them with a strong hand from the snare, Heb. 4. 15. Mat. 11. 28. Cant. 1. 4. &c. 2. His death and bitter sufferings, that he is the propitiation, and gave himself to be a ransom for sinners, 1 Tim. 2. 6. Rom. 5. 8. 1 Joh. 2. 2. &c. 3. That thus he is the way to life and happiness, that in him we may come boldly to the Throne of grace, and in his name ask what we will, that he is our advocate and maketh continual intercession for us, Joh. 14. 6. Eph. 3. 12. Rom. 5. 2. 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. 1 Joh. 2. 1. Heb. 7. 25. &c.

As for the first, not only do they hold out the Father as an angry and implacable one, to whom sinners dare not approach, (though he *so loved the world, that he spared not his only begotten Son, that it might not perish*, 1oh. 3. 16. 1 Ioh. 4. 9.) but also the compassionate Redeemer, who did not spare his blood that he might slay the enmity, and become the propitiation for reconciling us to God, Eph. 2. 16. 1 Ioh. 2. 2. And they have appealed from him (as being too rigid and severe to poor sinners) unto the throne of the Virgin Mary, as being more compassionate and condescending, and more ready to receive and do good to such: Hence their axiome and article of Faith (acknowledged by (f) Bellarmine and (g) Suarez) *opus est mediatore ad mediatorum*; We stand in need of a mediator to plead for us at the Mediators hands: and particularly as to the virgin Mary, they tell us, that (h) *mercy and justice being the two jewels of the crown of heaven, God hath divided his kingdom (as Ahasuerus offered to give the half of his to Esther) between himself and the virgin, giving to her mercy, and reserving only justice to himself.* Hence they (i) *appeal from the sons justice, to the mercy of his mother*, and therefore she is commonly called the mother of (k) *mercy*, and the (l) *Queen of mercy*, regina misericordiae, & mater misericordiae.

As to the second, they do not only undervalue Christs sufferings and merits as being insufficient, by joyning with them the merits of these new mediators, to make up (as it were) what was wanting on Christs part, but they so far undervalue what he did and suffered for sinners, that they will not vouchsafe once to mention his name or merits in their prayers; (as may be seen in many of their printed forms) and at other times, they dare rake his glorious name in their mouths in such a contemptible manner, that if they had not had the confidence to commit it to paper, it would scarce have been believed upon the testimony of others;

(f) Bell. loc.

dis. cap. 17.

§ 2. probatur.

(g) Dur.

ubi supra §

17. ex Ber.

ser. de B.

Virgine

(h) Pater ca-

lestis cum ha-

beat justitiam

& misericor-

diam tanquam

potiora sui

regni dona

justitia sibi re-

tenta miseri-

cordiam ma-

tri virgini

concessit Gab.

Biel in c. m.

miss. lect.

80 vid. etiam

Berchorium

lib. 19. mora-

lis. cap. 4. &

Jo. Gerson

tract. 4. super

magnificat.

(i) Et ideo si quis sensu se gravaria soro justitia Dei appellet ad serum misericordiae matris ejus. Bernard. de bust. maral. part. 13. serm. 3. (k) in officio beatae Mariz.

(l) Berchorius loc. cit.

(m) *Fave matri impera filio tuo dilectissimo Bonav. in Cor. B. mar. virg. & oper. rom. 6.*

(n) *Inclina vultum filii tui super nos, coge illum. &c. Psalt. Bon. (corism edit. Paris).*

(o) *Ut docet lex divina, tu illius es dominus, nam lex jubet & ratio matrem praeferre filio, hoc ex libro cui titulus Anidotum anima.*

O falsæ puerpera nostra piæ sceleris jure matris, impera redemptori missal. Rom.

(p) *Ita obcruciat ibat Bel-larmine rectoneth this amongst Calvins calumnies and yet returneth no answer unto it Bell. loc. cit. cap. 16. & dicit*

(q) *Expediit in calum est via per Franciscum quam per Christum apud W'entil. Chri. 7. theol. lib. 2. cap. 5.*

while as they pray to the Virgin, that by the right of a mother shee would (m) command, yea and (n) compell him to shew mercy to sinners; for (o) both law and reason do hold out the mothers power over the son, &c. O! the abominable Doctrine of merit in the poor creature, hath sent many a soul to hell; and hath so bewitched and infatuated many great and learned ones, till at length they have revered and worshipped the creature more then the Creator.

As to the 3, they are so far from acknowledging him to be the alone stor-house and conduit of mercy, that they have hewed out to themselves so many empy and broken cisterns, as there are evils they fear, or good things they desire: they have multiplied their Gods, not only according to the number of their cities, (as is said of back-slyding Judah, Jer. 2. 28.) but to the number of the inhabitants; non tantum numero (p) urbium sed pro numero capitum. Nay one and the same person must have his recourse to as many gods as there be mercies he stands in need of; they must commend their oxen to St. Pelagius, their horse to St. Entolius, their sheep to St. Wendelin, &c. And thus what is said of Christ, Col. 3. 11. Eph. 3. 12. &c. they may apply to their new mediators, whom they have substituted in his room. They are all, and in all to them, they are the way, and their propitiation, in them they have accessse with confidence, &c. Yea some of them have not stayed here, but as if it had been too little thus to undervalue, passe over, and forget the blessed Mediator, and put a Saint in his room, they have also been so bold as to make a comparison: as to their Praefise, we heard Cassanders ingenuous confession, that many did more trust and confide in the merits and intercession of their Saints, then in the merits of Christ. But you'll say, can any be so shamelesse as to avouch, that of themselves? yet we heard also Jacobus de Valentia his impudence, in professing (that we have no other refuge in our calamities but to run to the Virgin Mary the mediatrix, to pacifie her sons wrath; quæ iram filii sui placabit. and O! saith another (q) it is a more expedite and ready way to heaven by St. Francis, then by Christ. But I am wearied

ed in relating such abominable blasphemies and ridiculous dreams.

We will not lose time in returning an answer to objections, so many of our Divines having so fully vindicated these few Scriptures which some Papists, contrary to their own light, wrest, (as they 2 *Per.* 3. 16.) unto their own destruction; one of the most judicious and searching wits of the Jesuitick School, *Fra. Suarez*, having employed all his strength for finding out arguments, yet behold the result of all his labour, *the custom and appointment of the Church, which is the pillar of truth*, may (saith (r) he) suffice for con- (r) *Suar. loc. cit. cap. 10. § 3. 4.* And (l) *Ratio potiss.* yet he not daring to lean to this pillar, concludeth, that (f) *summa* the best reason he can fall upon is to answer the hereticks (so *est ex responsione ad argumenta haereticorum* ibid § 3. but *Bellarmin, Pighius, Salmeron* &c. do confesse that they (r) *ibid § 3. cit. cap. 19. & ord. disp. Salmeron* have the saints to have been till Christ went to hell and delivered them from the prison) and to supplicate their help: but *in 1. Timoth. 2. Eccius* (as we heard) cleareth both new and old Testament *disp. 8. &c.* from any imputation that Saint-worshippers can lay on (u) *Dom. Bannez* (u) *Bannez* confesseth and pleadeth *neq. in 2. 2. art. 10. in quadam* that neither the Scriptures of the old nor new Testament, *(nam varias habet conclusiones iste tractatus.)* do either explicitly or implicitly, directly or by consequence, hold out to us any ground for praying to the Saints.

When Papists therefore cite Scripture for this their Pagan dream, they hold out to us a torch for letting us see what is their temper, and that in this, as in many other cases, they are too like their brethren, these hereticks whom the Apostle mentioneth *Tit. 3. 11.* They are *αυτοκαταρπιτοι*; They are self convicted and condemned; but we remit them to their own consciences, to be sentenced there; and if they would speak what it saith, and some of them have been so ingenious as to confesse, they would not want for a reply from us.

Yet

Yet we deny not (and will ye therefore think that we deal more kindly with them, then some of their own number) but freely confesse, that in Scripture they may find both an exhortation or command, and practices or examples, if they be pleased to make use of these since they can find no better; thus, *Mat. 4. 9.* we have an exhortation to creature-worship: But Ah! it was but a temptation suggested by Sathan. Secondly, for examples, we find *Saul* seeking after *Samuel*, and making his addresse to him, *1 Sam. 28.* But Ah! first he went to the Witch at *Endor*, and by her enchantments did meet with the supposed, but not the true *Samuel*. And then, *Luk. 16.* the rich man in hell calls to *Abraham*: But we learned that point of Divinity in hell; and what successe found, we may read from *ver. 25.*

As for reasons; the most of these they have borrowed from Pagans, a long time after that ancient Christians had sufficiently answered and confuted them. There be only three other grounds, *viz.* 1. the mutual prayers of the living for one another. 2. the pretended miracles in confirmation of Saint-invocation. 3. the honour we ow to them. Of these in a word.

As to the first; Though the Saints desire the prayers of their brethren, they do not pray to them, nor worship them; and there be several reasons for such a practice. 1. Because the Saints while *in via* and on their journey, are in a praying condition; they pray for themselves, and why not also for their brethren? 2. They may know, and easily be acquainted with the tryals and wants of their brethren. 3. They have a command to pray for one another. 4. They have a promise of audience and successe; and 5. The unquestionable and constant practice of the godly in all ages, for their encouragement in the performance of this duty. And thus the disparity between the living and the dead, as to the present case, is manifest; and therefore we have no such ground to call for the prayers of the dead as of the living.

Yet if Papists did only plead, that the dead did pray for the living, we should not condemn them upon this account; since many reformed Divines do in the general grant this;
the

the Augustan, the Saxonick, and the Wirtembergick confessions, *Melancthon, Brentius, Chemnitius, Tilenus, Diodati, Parani, Durham, &c.* Yea, 2. If they did only desire the prayers of the Saints, as we do of the living, and did not pray to them and worship them, though we would pity them in this their fruitlesse and unwarrantable labour, while they took pains to sollicite them, who neither did hear, know, nor take notice of them, yet we could not accuse them of idolatry and creature-worship: And this one of them (x) (*George Cassander* a moderate Papist) doth professe to be his judgment, *Our interpellations, saith he, should be expounded by way of wishing and desiring that they would pray to God for us without any act of worship.* But I know not a second who doth joyn with him in this; but for his modesty in this and other particulars, he is accounted by the rest to be a luke-warm Catholick: but thus, if they would only (y) *pray the Saints*, and not *pray to the Saints* to pray for them, we should rather commiserate them, then take pains to confute them.

As to the second, The miracles (which (z) *Bellarmino* will have to be infinite) wrought in confirmation of this, are not all of one size. 1. The Histories of many are fabulous, being invented by some idle Monks and lying Poets. 2. A great part of these miracles are counterfeit, for fostering the deluded multitude in their superstition; such is their restoring the sight to those who never wanted it, and their curing many diseases in them, who are as whole as the Physicians. 3. We deny not, that something like a real miracle may be wrought by him and his emissaries, *whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders*, *2 Thess. 2. 9.* O! If Papists would ponder that which followeth, *ver. 10, 11, 12.* they durst not make use of this objection.

As to the third. We do not wrong the Saints in glory, while we refuse to take the crown off Christs head and put it on theirs; they cast their crowns down at his feet, *Rev. 4. 10.* and shall we throw down Christs crown at their feet? they fall down and worship him, as being worthy to receive

(x) *Credendum ad calumnias nonnullorum sapientis esse dicimus per modum desiderii eas interpellationes explicari posse quod minus habet absurditatis*
et divinarum litterarum exemplis congruis, &c. Cassander. opus. 19. ad Molin. vid. etiam schol. in hym. eccl. operum pag. 222.
 (y) *The first of these (according to our way of speaking) only importing a desire and request, but the second an act of worship.*
 (z) *Accedunt postremo infinita miracula, &c. Bell. loc. cit. cap. 19.*

glory and honour, having created all things for himself, ver 10, 11. and shall we idolize and worship the poor creature? Oh! how do these holy spirits abominate that honour and worship, that is given unto them? and if they were on earth, and did converse with the living, they would joyn with us, and with indignation say to Papists (as Paul and Barnabas did in the like case, *Act. 14. 14, 15.*) *Sirs, why do ye these things? We were also men, of like passions with you, and are yet your fellow-creatures and brethren; Ah, turn from these vanities unto the living God.*

(a) August.
de ver. relig.
cap. 55
(b) de civit.
Dei lib. 22.
cap. 10.

We say with *Augustine*, (a) *Honorandi sunt propter imitationem, non adorandi propter religionem; honoramus eos charitate non servitute; (b) nominantur a Sacerdote, non invocantur.* We honour the Saints with the honour of love, not of servitude, for imitation not for adoration; and the Pastor doth name them for their vertue, but doth not call upon them as gods and patrons: though we make not idols of them, yet their memory is precious with us; as we praise God for that measure of grace he gave to them, so we love and reverence them, because they were thus beloved of our Father, and because they honestly endeavoured to improve his talents to the honour of his name, and we labour to imitate them in their humility, faith, patience, zeal, &c.

But praise be to our God, who hath not left us to the care of such Patrons, who are ignorant of us, and know not what we stand in need of; and praise to him, who will not shut the door on us till these Courtiers make way for our admission: Though all Angels and Saints in glory be ignorant of us, and do not acknowledge us, yet we may (with that people, *Isa. 63. 16.*) to our comfort say, *Doublets thou art our father, and as a father pitiest his children, so thou wilt pity us, and welcome us when we draw nigh to thee.* *Pf. 103. 13. His eyes are still over us, and his ear open to our prayers,* *Pet. 3. 12.* Men would purchase at a dear rate such a priviledge on earth, alwaies to have the Kings ear, that he would but hearken to their desires, that they might but alwaies have access to him; but we have this liberty purchased to us by the blood of the Kings son, we may
alwaies

alwaies draw nigh to the King of Kings ; we have moyeh at Court ; and we have not only the privilege to come, but also our acceptance and successe made sure unto us by the word of the King and the purchase of his Son, and now we may ask what we will and it shall be given us. Praise be to him, who hath such bowels towards poor sinners, and will not send them to the empty Cisterns of creature-compassion and bounty : And all praise and honour be for ever ascribed to him, who is the propitiation, in whom we have accessse with boldness unto the throne of grace. What need we other advocates to plead our cause ? Doth not our Redeemer live for ever ? doth he not live to make intercession for us ? We neither want a *Priest* nor (c) *Altar* ; why do we not then dayly bring our *offering* ; our Priest will not mingle our blood (as (d) *Pilat* did the Galileans) but his own with our sacrifices ; the smoak of his incense ascends for ever ; his blood cryeth while we are silent ; he is our *ALL*, he is all to us, *Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. And from him as the fountain, all our streams do flow, all the good and great things we have and hope for, must be conveyed to us through this Conduit, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. O what a spirit of delusion and desperate folly, must blind-fold and act these miserable wretches, who do despise this open and full fountaine, and run to the empty and dry pools, which have no water to spare : Though the wise virgins now have their vessels filled to the brim, yet they have no oyl to spare ; though they have more now then while they did wait the coming of the bridegroom, yet they have no more to spare ; all their stock and treasure, being for their own use and employment : And since they had not one (e) penny wherewith they might buy for themselves, how shall they be able to lend to others ? Their reward was not of (f) *debt*, but of *grace*. And if with the foolish virgins we trust to their money, and come to them for a supply, we will speed no better then they did. Long may deluded Papists knock at their gates before they open ; the doors are shut, and they do not look out ; and to what purpose should they open ? they have not an almes to give : If they did speak,

(c) Heb. 13¹⁰.

(d) Luk. 13³².

(e) *Acceptantur iusti, non dederunt corpus, et de fortitudine exemplum nata sunt parientia non dona iustitia.* Leo. 1. *Papa epist.* 83. ad Palest. *epist.* cap. 4.

(f) Rom. 4⁴.

they would return this answer. *Oh Sirs, ye are wrong, what do ye mean? why come ye unto us who live upon mercy, as if we had purchased a stock whereon ye and we might live? and do ye think, that the unsearchable riches of Christ are so far spent, that there is nothing left for you? Ah, leave these vanities, and go to the right and only fountain, that of its fulness ye may receive, that ye may drink and be satisfied, and may taste of that pure river of (g) pleasures, that are at his right hand for evermore.*

(g) Pl. 16. 11.

CHAP. VII.

Of the matter and object of prayer.

1 Joh. 5. 14. *If we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.*

(a) Thus in the definition its said to be an offering up of our desires to God.

(b) Mat. 2. 2.

(c) Mal. 1. 8.

(d) *ibid.* v. 7.

(e) *ibid.* v. 8.

Payer being our spiritual (a) oblation, we must take heed what we offer to the great King, least he (b) spread upon our faces the dung of our sacrifices: We must (c) not offer to him the blind and the lame, far lesse the (d) polluted and unclean; we must not (e) deal worse with him then with our Governours; and who dare present to them a supplication stuffed with treason and contempt? And should we not beware, that our petitions to God be not treacherous, and contain nothing against his majesty and holiness? Our prayers then ought only be for *things agreeable to his will*, 1 Joh. 5. 14. Thus in few words we have the materials of prayer held forth. And for further explication, we shall speak to these three particulars. 1. Of the rule whereunto our desires and petitions must be conformed. And then, because the matter it self and object of prayer, is either *things* or *persons*; we shall in the 2. place enquire, what are these things for which we should pray, and after what method and order; and 3. for whom, or for what persons we may supplicate; that having shown, 1. *what* kind of desire, 2. *who* should offer it up, and 3. *to whom*; so now it may appear, 4. *for what*, and 5. *for whom*.

Sect. 1.

Of the warrant, ground, and rule of prayer.

Albeit no reason can be given why that proud King should have appointed, that none, who came unto him without a call, should live, except such to whom he held forth the golden Scepter, *Exh. 4. 11.* Yet who can doubt, or needs ask a reason, why stubble should not approach the fire? why we rebels durst not draw nigh to the provoked King, without his call and invitation; if he did not stretch forth the golden Scepter unto us, not only for our safety after we come, but also to allure us to come, we were in as desperate a case as the devils and damned in hell, and durst not more then they approach the Throne. But praise to his free grace, who hath prevented us with his loving entreaties and ravishing invitations, and hath given us so many large promises of successe, that we may draw nigh to him with confidence. But as thus, we must have a warrant to come, so for what we should say and ask when we come; and the sole ground both of the one and of the other, must be the will of God revealed to us in his Word: We will speak of the first in its (*a*) own place, but now we must only enquire, what is the rule and copy whereby we must regulate, and whereunto we must conform our supplications; and thus in the description of prayer, the object and matter of it is qualified and limited; we must not ask what our carnal will and lusts would crave, but only these things that are agreeable to the will of God: And thus the will of God must be our alone rule and warrant.

(a) *Viz. part. 2. in the supports of faith, and part. 4. in the motives to the frequent practice of this duty.*

The

Of the Warrant, ground and rule of prayer.

(b) *We will not here meddle with the School debates and subtilties concerning the conformity of our actions to the will of God. Albeis for the most part the Rab- bies are very grosse and erroneous, yet I know no question handled by them with so much obscuri- ty and confusi- on as this, by those I have perused, as Lomb. lib. 1. sent. dist. 48. Thom. 1. 2. q. 19. a. 9. 10. Scot. in. lib. 1. sent. dist. 48. q. unica. Gul. Occam.*

The (b) *will of God* (as to our point) way fall under a threefold consideration, 1. as it doth import the decrees and eternal purposes of God. 2. The commands and precepts; and 3. the promises. The Scriptures frequently hold forth all these as the will of God, and so we must speak of them. For albeit the commandments and promises, are rather signs of Gods will and expressions; the one, viz. the commandments of our duty; and the other, viz. the promises, of our reward, the one holding out the rule of, the other, a comfortable motive to obedience. Yet they do suppose, and carry along with them the mind and will of God, not concerning events which must come to pass, but concerning our duty and carriage; they shew unto us what God hath appointed us to do, and what would be well-pleasing and acceptable unto him; and what we may expect from him when we make conscience of our duty, and are carefull to obey and conform our wayes to his will.

As for the first, the purposes and decrees of God concerning the futurition of events, cannot be the rule of prayer: God's determining and appointing that such things shall, or shall not come to passe, cannot be a warrant and rule for us to ask, or not to ask such things. 1. Because the decrees of God are hidden and not known to us, but by their execution, and thus if the decree were a rule, we should not know what to ask till we had received, and then we should praise and not petition: it were foolish to ask what we have already gotten. 2. There could be no sinfull omission, and none must be ob-

Gab. Biel ibid. Jo. Major. in 1. sent. dist. 47. q. unica. & in dist. 48. q. un. Ray- nand mor. discip. dist. 4. q. 1. a. 3. § 77. Vasquez. tom. 1. in 1. 2. disp. 71. Suarez ibid. tract. 4. disp. 11. (and it may be enquired by what secret sympathy these two (last named) Doctors have so far homologated in this question, as that ye would scarce discern any difference be- tween the children, albeit the parents lived at so great a distance. But Arriaga in another case clearath this mystery, shewing, that though Vasquez did first publish that some in print, yet he did see Suarez dissent, and transcribed several particulars from thence) we need not name those who only in the by have spoken to that question, such as Becan, Petrus a S. Joseph, &c. since these who have spent whole and entire disputations for clearing the matter, have so much darkned and obscured it, that it were no difficult task to hold out, not only several er- rors, but also contradictions in one and the same author: but we shall only meddle with so much of that question as concerneth our present purpose.

figed to do more then he doth ; for God not having decreed that he shall do, he must (according to that opinion) want a rule and warrant for acting and doing, and so cannot be obliged to do, but must do well in not doing, and become guilty if he did act and do. 3. If the decrees of God concerning the futuration of events were a rule, either for our works or desires and prayers, all the scandals and offences, all the abominable practices of vile men, all their treacheries, oppressions, &c. would be service done to God ; and while the actors were doing or designing their mischeivous courses, they might recommend these to God and offer them up in prayer, and accordingly expect successe unto, and a blessing upon such wicked endeavours.

But some perhaps will reply : Albeit the secret counsel, and hidden decrees of God cannot be our rule, as being unknown to us, till the event and execution bring them to light ; yet if the eternal and immutable purpose of God were revealed unto us, and therefore so far as, and when it is discovered and revealed to us, it must lay an obligation on us to comply with it, and not to counteract, or in the least oppose and appear against it, least we be found to proclaim a war with the heavens, and a licence for potshards on earth to strive with their Maker. *Ans.* Not only the decrees of God, as they are lockt up in the infinit treasure of his omniscience, and kept secret from us, cannot be a rule whereunto we should conform our wayes and actions, but even after they are revealed unto us ; and we may as truly be said to fight against God and oppose our wills to his, while we pray and wrestle against his hidden, as when against his revealed purposes. For though our ignorance may excuse and diminish our guiltiness in part, yet it cannot altogether remove it, nor annul that real opposition, that is between our prayers and endeavours and the decrees of God. And thus the godly, when they meet with disappointment, and thus come to see that they have had the decree of God against them, must be in a sad plight, when they consider, that all the while they have been fighting and rebelling against God in their prayers, endeavours, &c.

As therefore we must not make Gods secret decrees concerning things that shall come to passe our rule, so neither though they were, and when they are revealed to us; for, *Herod, Pontius Pilat*, and the people of *Israel* did nothing against our blessed Saviour but what the hand and counsel of God had determined to be done, *Act. 4. 27. 28.* And yet that was no plea for them; and though they had (as all of them from the Scriptures might have) known the mind of God in this, yet should they not have prayed for grace, whereby they might have been enabled to withstand temptations to such a vile fact? and was it not their duty, not withstanding of such a decree, to own and stand for Christ? and had it been a sin in *Hazael* to continue in that good mood, in which he seemed to be, when he ask't if he was a dog to commit such wickednesse and cruelty as the Prophet foretold to be don by him? *2 King. 8. 13, 12.* Christ shew to *Peter* that he should deny him, and that the rest of the disciples would forsake him, and be offended because of him, *Mat. 26. 31. Job. 16. 32.* Will any man therefore imagine that it was not lawfull for *Peter*, and the rest of the Apostles to (c) pray, watch, and strive against the temptations wherewith they were to encounter? Nay if this foundation were once laid, what vile and abominable inferences might be drawn from it? That holynesse were needlesse, yea that there could no sin be committed by devils or men, and that the vilest wretch did no lesse please God then the holiest man on earth, or Saint in heaven; because that all things that come to passe do fall under the decree of God; thus also the wicked son (according to that well known instance of (d) *Augustin*) who wisheth his sick Fathers death, that he might enjoy the inheritance, would be more innocent and commendable then the godly son, who prayeth and desireth that his Father may live; because the wicked son hath the decree of God on his side, and willeth what God willeth and hath decreed; since (as is supposed) the father dieth, and doth not recover. The Apostle, *Rom. 9. 19.* meets with a blasphemy which sprang from this root; *Why doth he yet find fault? (did desperat sinners say) for, who hath resisted his will?* as if they had

(c) And then
Christ's exhortation to watch and pray *Mat. 26. 41.* had been needlesse if not also insull.

(d) *August. Enchirid. cap. 101. Aliquando autem bona voluntate homo vult aliquid quod Deus non vult*

— *tantumquam si bonus filius patrem velit vivere, quem Deus bona voluntate vult mori, & rursus fieri potest ut hoc velit homo voluntate mala quod Deus vult bonam, ut si malus filius velit mori patrem, velit hoc etiam Deus, &c. vid. loc.*

had said we are to be excused who have done nothing contrary to the will and decree of God; Nay, say they, the will of God did not only lay an obligation, but a necessity on us to obey and conform our wayes, and is there any reason then why God should complain of us, who have such a warrant for all we have don? To which vain Plea the Apostle replieth *ver, 20. Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God?* and proceedeth to shew from Gods sovereignty, his right and power to dispose of his creatures according to his own good pleasure; but from this dispute we may clearly discern, that Gods decree is no cloak for sin, nor a law to justifie our wayes and desires.

But you will say, though it be not an adequate rule, and so not a sufficient ground to denominat an action good, because its conform thereunto, yet it must so far be acknowledged for a rule, as that it must acquite and excuse (if not justifie) the doer, in that it did lay on him a necessity to obey and conform his work thereunto. *Ans.* He who would plead not guilty, because his wayes are conform to the decrees of God, must either be grossly ignorant, or desperately perverse, not knowing, or not caring what he saith; for God by his most holy and spotlesse Decrees doth not force, draw, necessitate, or tempt any man to sin; neither doth he thereby command, approve, or testifie his approbation of, or complacency in any sinfull action; only he purposeth not to hinder, but to permit sinfull men to become a prey to their own lusts, and the temptations they shall meet with in their way: we must not indeed imagine that Gods providence is sleeping while occasions are offered, or that there is in his most holy will, no positive act concerning the futurition of sin; its long since (c) *Bradwardin* did demonstrat the contrary; and the Jesuits themselves do confesse that there is a necessary connexion between the divine permission & the creatures committing of sin, so that the futurition of sin may be concluded by a necessary illation from such a permission of it; our Divines and the Dominicans call it a *permissive Decree, decretum permissivum*. I like not the expression: but the penury of words hath extorted it: that epithet and denomination is not taken

(c) *Circa quod
cunque est Dei
permissio, est
ejus volitio
actualis Brad.
de causa Dei,
lib. 1. cap. 22.
33. hoc quippe
ipso quod con-
tra voluntatem
Discederunt de
ipsis solta est
voluntas ejus,
propterea
namque magna
opera Domini,
— ut miror in-
stabili modo
non fiat præter
ejus volunta-
tem quod etiam
contra ejus sit
voluntatem,
quoniam fieret si
non suerit nec
utique noluit
fieri sed volens
August. Ench.
ad Laur. cap.
100.*

from the act, as if it were 1. Positive, and, 2. efficacious, but from the object. Because the holy Lord thus doth purpose not to procure and work, but to permit the creature to follow its course: but we will launch no farther bow into this Ocean; but thus it may appear, that the divine Decree concerning the futurition of sin, doth not import Gods willing, or approving, his working, or procuring of sin: we cannot be said to fight against God, or to oppose his will and work, while we strive against sin: albeit we can do nothing without or beyond the divine appointment; and albeit he will order and dispose of our sins to his own glory, and thus cause (f) sweetness to come out of the strong; yet this is no excuse for the sinner who (g) mindeth no such matter, but serveth his own lusts, and thus provoketh and dishonoureth God.

(f) Judg. 14.

34.

(g) Vid. August. Enchir. 194.

And thus notwithstanding of any decree in God, he is justly displeased with sin, and justly punisheth the sinner; albeit there can nothing come to passe without his efficacious, well ordering and all-governing providence; yet sin is none of Gods works, there is nothing in it that God will own, its a bastard, begotten by the wretched creature, which cannot without blasphemy be fathered on God; what is said of the child is true of the parent, what of a particular rod, *Exek. 7. 5.* is verified in every sin, *it is an evil, an only evil*, not (b) only to the committers as that judgment to the sufferers, and to the impenitent on whom it was inflicted; but also in it self, there is nothing in it which God can will or love: though he will suffer and permit sin to be, yet we cannot say that God willet sin to be, though he decreeth to suffer and permit us to sin, yet he decreeth not, and willet not (for that doth import his approbation and efficiency) us to sin: there is here then an efficacious permission, and a willing, and decreeing to suffer men and devils to sin, but there is no warrant, or commission, no approbation or licence for us to sin; and no divine (i) efficiency and causality in (though about) sin.

(b) Non solum
subjective sed
etiam formaliter
est in se.

(i) Non in se
circa peccatum.

Thus then the morality of our actions must not be measured by any decree concerning the futurition of events, but by

by some other rule, in which must concur Gods will and appointment, setting bounds unto us, and designing our duty, and discovering what is well-pleasing and acceptable to God, honest and laudable in it self, and profitable and comfortable to us in the issue; and thus we have the word of God for our direction, and have his laws and testimonies to be our rule. *Dent.* 29. 29. *1/4.* 8. 20. *Dent.* 30. 10, 11, 12, *Dent.* 5. 29. *Psal.* 147. 19. *Rom.* 12. 2. *1 Thes.* 4. 2. *1 Pet.* 4. 2. &c. and we may take notice of these three things as necessarily requisite and concurring in that which is a warrant unto, and rule of our actions and petitions. 1. The good pleasure and decree of God, not concerning what shall come to passe, but concerning the quality and morall goodnesse of human actions, and which doth limit and set bounds to reasonable creatures, and prescribeth unto them their duty; and this is the fountain and first spring, (yea and by many judicious and sober Divines is judged to be the supreme adequate and first rule) of morall rectitude. Hence we may conceive that Gods laws in Scripture are called *Decrees, Statutes and Ordinances*. 2. From this decree and appointment, doth (to our apprehension) flow divine approbation, complacency and delight in what is thus appointed to be our work and duty: hence that appointment is called *the good, acceptable and perfect will of God*, *Rom.* 12. 2. and our actions when conform to that rule, are said to be *well pleasing in his sight*, *Heb.* 13. 2. yea the Lord doth not only declare his love of his complacency, and delight in these when they are performed, but also he is said to will and desire (though not according to the (k) Jesuiticall and Arminian glosse) those works while he is speaking to the rebellious and disobedient, who have slighted his laws, and casten all his statutes behind their backs. *Ezek.* 18. 23, 32. *Ezek.* 33. 11. *Hos.* 6. 6. *1 Sam.* 15. 22, *1/4.* 61. 8. *Mat.* 9. 13. *2 Pet.* 3. 9. &c. 3. There must be an intimation and promulgation of this decree and appointment, and a declaration of those things that would be well pleasing, and acceptable to God. Its disputed amongst (n) Lawyers and (m) School-men, whether humane laws do bind and oblige before they be intimated, and made known; and what sort of

(k) Arm. Socin. and Jels. from thence would collect a frustrable and inefficacious will and desire in God, but this phrase doth only import Gods serious approbation of the works of righteousness and detestation of the contrary.

(l) Gratian, ap. in istis temporal. d. 4. leges instrumentum cum promulgatur, vid. juo civ metib. Gdn leg pari 1. 13. ubi eff. la digna vox & de leg &c.

(m) Vid. Tho. 1. 2. quest. 90. art. 4. & Com. ad loc.

promulgation is necessary; but this question is more thorny and difficult, while it is applyed to divine laws (which were not pertinent for us here to debate) yet we expect, that none will deny, that some sort of promulgation and intimation is necessary, unlesse it be granted, that reasonable creatures may be obliged to a blind and brutish obedience; yea, obedience in such a case were not obedience; for though there may be some part of conformity to the law, and so a kind of material obedience, yet properly it cannot be so called, because thus to obey doth import the law and command to be a motive (and so must be known) engaging and prevailing with us to do. And that Gods law doth not impose an obligation, where there is no kind of promulgation, may be collected from, *Rom. 2. 12.* where the Apostle affirmeth that Pagans, who had not the means for attaining the knowledge of Gods will revealed in the Scriptures, shall not be judged by the Scriptures, and that word which they could not know; hence Divines affirm their ignorance of the mysteries of the Gospel, and their infidelity to be *negative*, and not *privative*.

But we did say, that some sort of signification and promulgation was necessary, not determining the particular way and maner; but from that Text it doth appear, that a formal promulgation by voyce or writ. is not necessary, for God did not thus communicate and impart any law to Pagans; yet they shall perish and be judged by a law, and be condemned for their disobedience unto that law, which was not written (as to them) with pen and ink, but with the finger of God ingraven on their hearts, *ver. 15.* The Lord did implant and radically promulgate a law to them, while he infused into them a reasonable soul, whereby they might know, and discern between right and wrong, good and evil: There be many practical (*) principles of moral equity, which the light of nature can discover, and were known to heathens; yea, the most of duties prescribed in the decalogue, are to be found in the writings of *Plato, Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch,* &c. We might ascend higher to the first and primaval principle, that light and sound reason, which was in *Adam* before.

(*) *Naturalis
viva practica.*

before the fall, which was a more bright lamp, and of a farther reach, then that dark candle that since is left in us, to direct our steps and point out our way. There was indeed in man, while he stood, that *recta ratio*, which might have been admitted for a rule, but subordinate to the will and law of God, *regula regulata*, not *regulans*; there was then no disconformity between these two rules; but popish Schoolmen must be very impudent, who will make our (o) judgement and reason to be the proper, and (as (p) Thomas calleth it) homogeneal rule of our actions, now after it hath lost its rectitude; Wo to them, who were left to the direction of this blind guide; though seeing *Samson* was a Judge and leader of the people of *Israel*, yet after his eyes were put out the meanest (q) boy of *Philistia* was fitter to be a guide and leader to him.

But we may here enquire if what was, or might have been known of our duty by *Adam* in innocency, if what that pure and clear lamp in him could discover, should be esteemed and accounted to be manifested unto us, who then were in his loyns? Albeit now, after we have not only shur, but put out our own eyes, we cannot discern nor look so far off: But we need not meddle with that debate, nor go so far to light a candle to let us see our way, albeit in that case, there were a radical promulgation of Gods mind and our duty made to us, as branches of that old root; and thus the Lord out of his sovereignty, might reckon with us, as being guilty of the sin of (r) ignorance, after that we had improven to the utmost all the helps that Pagans have for attaining of knowledge: But praised be our God, who hath not sent us to wander into such a wilderness, nor to look to the Sun through such a prospect, and to read his mind in that dark volum of creation and providence, by the pagan star-light of natural reason, but hath shewed unto us in his Word, what is good and acceptable to him, and what he requireth of us, *Mic. 6. 8. Deut. 10. 12, 13. and 30. 31.* &c. Therefore Gods laws and commandments, as to us, may well be (s) called *Testimonies*; because by his Prophets and messengers, as so many heraulds, he hath again and again promulgate them, and

(o) Quod Raynandus vocat iudicium practicum prudentiale, vid. mor. dist. 4. quest. 11. art. 3 per totum.

(p) Thom: 1. 2. quest. 71. art. 6. in corp.

(q) Judg. 16. 26.

(r) Even that ignorance which Divines call negative, may thus be reputed privative and culpable.

(s) As Isa: 8. 10. Pl. 78. 56. Deut. 6. 20. and.

and testified unto us what he requireth of us, and hath left to us an authentick register to which we may have our recourse.

But since there must be some kind of intimation and manifestation of this approbative (as we may call it) and legislative (r) will of God; it may be enquired how, and after what manner are the materials of prayer determined and discovered to us? and I think the question may only be moved concerning these four; whether, 1. by precept, 2. by promise, 3. by approved examples of the Saints, who have petitioned the like mercies; and, 4. by the works of providence.

(t) Thom.
1. quest. 19.
art. 12. enu-
merates five
signs of Gods
will, viz;
Prohibitio-
nem, præcep-
tum, consili-
um, operati-
onem & per-
missionem.
We will not
now stay to
show that 1.
this number is
not full, 2. that
the members
are not opposit,
3. that all of
them are not
proper signs,
&c. but we
wave that
enumeration
as being im-
pertinent to
our purpose.

Ans. 1. It will not be denied, that the most part of things, whether bodily or spiritual, which Christians stand in need of, may be petitioned, and prayed for with that threefold warrant of precept, promise and approved example; and that either directly, or by clear and undeniable consequence, or at least by analogy, similitude and parity of reason: and when those concur, there can be no place for doubting; such a threefold cord will easily bind the most scrupulous conscience.

2. To speak of these severally, the third alone, and without a restriction cannot be acknowledged to be a rule, or warrant for our practice, either in this or other cases; for the Prophets, Apostles and eminent Saints, whose practice is registrated in the Word, being extraordinarily qualified, and sometimes called to extraordinary duties and service, as to work miracles, &c. their carriage cannot be a warrant to us to take such works in hand, and to essay to do what they did; so they meeting with singular occasions and exigencies, and having a special call, impression, and impulse on their spirits, might confidently expect, and in faith pray for several mercies, which others have no warrant to petition: Their practice then and prayers, must only be lookt upon as an additional, and cumulative warrant and encouragement to us; that is to say, when their practice doth suppose some other foundation and ground (which must either be a standing and general command or promise) we may safely follow their footsteps.

3. As for the first, viz. the Precepts and Commandments of God, because of the majesty and supreme authority of the Law-giver; these do not only carry alongst with them a warrant for us to conform our wayes thereunto, but also lay a necessity and obligation upon us to obey.

4. The difficulty then only remains concerning the promises, and the dispensations of providence.

1. Then as to the promises, it may be enquired, whether they alone and of themselves, be a sufficient ground and warrant for our prayers, so that we may confidently and in faith pray for what the Lord hath promised to give, though we have no expresse command to ask such a particular mercy.

For removing and clearing of which, it may be, 1. enquired if such a case be ordinary and often occurreth, or if it be merely speculative and by way of supposition. 2. Whatever others may see, yet I know no promised mercy, that we may not pray for by vertue of a Precept, either particularly expressing such a mercy, or comprehending and including it under its object (and generals hold out as sure a ground for particulars comprehended under them, as if these particulars were named) yea, precept and promise (as to our case especially) go hand in hand, are of equal extent, and cannot be separated, *Mat. 7. 7. Job. 16. 23, 24.* And this is one of our Christian principles and *precognita*, which all must believe, viz. *That God is a rewarder of them all that come unto him*, in the way he hath (u) appointed and commanded, *Heb. 11. 6. Isa. 45. 19.*

Yet, 2. If we look upon these severally, and enquire after their proper, formal and most direct effect, end and use, we deny not [that (x) the command may be said to be that whereby prayer is authorized and made necessary; and the promise to be that which holds out a comfortable motive and encouragement; and that the Precept is the ground of conscience, for undertaking and regulating the duty, and the promise, the ground of confidence and assurance of success.]

3. We would put a difference between general, constant and standing, and special and occasional promises, made to

some enquiry.

(u) But others
wise he might
say so these
who seek his
face, as to;
them, *Isa. 1.*
12. who
required these
things at your
hands?

(x) We deny
not this hypo-
thesis of that
worthy Divine
with whom
we cannot
close in his
resolution of
this case,
which we have
not seen pro-
pounded by
any other, and
whose opinion
therein hath
occasioned this

some one or few persons, upon some particular account and exigence; for these special promises cannot be a ground for others to expect or pray for such mercies; yea, nor to them to whom they were made, if the occasion be past or altered; yet when, and so long as the promise is in force, and so long as the ground and occasion continueth, it is warrant enough to expect and petition such a mercy. Thus *David* professeth, that the word of promise was warrant and motive enough to him to pray for the establishment of his house and throne for many generations, 2 *Sam.* 7. 27. 25, 26, 29. And as thus, special promises are a sufficient rule for particular persons and cases, so general promises are general rules to all persons.

But it would be remembred, that some promises are called general, because they belong to all and every one in their several places, stations, occasions and exigences; and these hold out a general rule and directory to all Christians. Other promises are called general, not because they belong to all and every one, but only to all in such a rank, station and condition; thus the Christian Magistrate, may pray for the gift of Government; the Minister for a blessing upon his ministry, and every one according to his place and employment, or particular business or need, may seek assistance, successe, direction, deliverance, &c. by vertue of general promises made to all in such a rank and condition: And if thy particular employment and business, be not expressly mentioned in the Word, thou mayest have recourse to general promises, as being a sufficient warrant and encouragement for thee to ask such and such a particular blessing. There is room enough, and a blank left in the general word of promise, for thee to write in thy name and condition. And such promises are as sure foundation for thy prayers, as if thy particular business and exigence had been there expressed; and thou needest not fear to apply them to thee, and then confidently thou mayest expect their performance.

And thus, 5. In answer to the question we affirm, that the promise is a sufficient warrant, to all to whom it belongeth, to pray for the mercy it holdeth forth; and this may appear,

pear, 1. from the nature, scope and end of the promise? For, what is a promise, but *an intimation and expression of Gods will, to give good things, and withhold or remove evil from us*? And if so, then to deny the promise to be a ground and warrant to pray, is in effect to deny, 1. That we may pray the Lord to bestow these mercies he purposeth to bestow upon us, 2. That we may desire from God these things we know to be agreeable to his will and for our good. And 3. That the promise is an encouragement to duty; for if it encourage us to duty, it must carry along with it a warrant for doing, since a divine motive (such as Gods promise must be) must be to a good and lawfull end; and therefore, since the promises are as so many motives and encouragements to pray for what is promised, they must carry along with them a sufficient ground and warrant for our prayers; and accordingly, the servant of God *David*, no sooner meets with a promise, but he turns it into a prayer, *2 Sam. 7. 27.* Where we may take notice of the inference he there maketh, *Because thou hast promised* (saith he) *Therefore thy servants hath found in his heart to pray.* © might some have said, ye are too rash to run to the Throne, where is your warrant? you have no command. O but (saith *David*) have I not Gods Word? He hath said, and promised to give, and that's warrant enough for me to ask. Its true, before the word of promise came, I had no warrant thus peremptorily and absolutely to ask such a temporal mercy, but now having his Word to build upon, what can devils and men say for shaking my faith? You will say, (y) that promise was concerning a peculiar blessing out of the common road, and therefore, though it was ground enough for *David* to build his prayer upon; yet general and perpetual promises are not a warrant. *Ans.* That difference maketh for us, and not for the objecter. For when the promised mercy is peculiar, it would appear, that there were greater need of a special warrant and command, then when the mercy is common, in which all have some sort of right by a general word of promise; and so none need to scruple to plead their right. The more narrow the way is, there is the greater need

(y) See *the eminent modern Divine Treat. of prayer and divine providence, ch. 3. § 2. pag. 104. objection.*

(2) Ibid.
pag. 105.
Obj. 1.

of light and hedges, to keep us from mistakes and deviation.

But (2) you will object, some things may be found promised that are not to be prayed for; as vengeance upon enemies, and a retribution of our wrongs, *Rom. 12. 19. Heb. 10. 30. and that there shall not perish and hair of our head, Luk. 21. 18. Ans.* While we draw nigh to God, we need not fear. 1. Least we mistake the way, when we have the Sun-light of a promise to direct our steps. 2. Least we faint and weary (unless the cause be within and from our selves) who have such a cordial as the breasts of the promise doth yield, for quickning and reviving our spirits, and such refreshment as the refulgent beams of that luminary will afford, when they shine and reflect upon us. As to the first instance, it being made up of a promise, respecting our good, protection and deliverance from the rage of cruel enemies, and of a threatening of judgment and wrath as to them; we must put a difference between these two, and may go safely as far as the promise conducteth; we may pray for deliverance from enemies, abstracting from the threatening, and committing the manner and way of our deliverance to God, that he might take such course in his holy and wise providence for accomplishing that promise as seemeth good to him, viz. either by confounding, restraining, or reclaiming of them; so that notwithstanding of our pleading that promise of deliverance, which is complicated with a threatening against enemies, we might pray for their good here, and eternally hereafter. For we did not say, that threatnings were a warrant for, and rule of our prayers; yea, on the contrary, the end (4) of the threatening being the conversion and repentance of the sinner, we should improve it, as a strong motive to deprecate that and other judgments; not only should the threatening stir up them to pray for themselves, but it may stir up others, though injured by them, to pray for them. As to the second instance, we should not so much look on the letter, as the meaning and scope of these words, which is to comfort the godly under their trials, from the consideration of Gods powerfull and over-ruling providence, who

(2) That is
the end of the
dispensation,
whatever holy
and the Lord
in his wisdom
hath proposed,
finis operis,
though not
always finis
operantis,

who can (notwithstanding of the power and malice of enemies) so guard and defend (yea, and if it be for the glory of his name and their good, will certainly so protect) them, that they shall not be able in the least to wrong them; and for strengthening their confidence in God, and that they might the better undervalue the threatening and proud boasting of vain weak man, the least and most inconsiderable injury is instanced, that enemies shall not be able to do so much as pull out one hair out of their head; and what is there in this promise (though we would only consider what is directly held forth in the words) that doth not beseech the prayers of the Saints? You will say, it doth not beseech the modesty, and looketh not like Christian self-denial, to be so far in love with our selves and our own things, as to desire and put up a prayer for these smaller things, which the very Pagans do far undervalue, as not to set their hearts upon them, or once to mention them. *Ans.* That is, as if it had been said *That we should be ashamed to ask, what the Lord was not ashamed to promise.* And should we not think it worthy of room in our Cabin, which the Lord thought worthy to put in Bond and give us security for. And is there any mercy so little, for which we are not bound to praise God when he giveth it? And may we not pray for that for which we should give thanks? Its true, we should not set our heart and affections upon these small things; yea, nor upon the greatest bodily and perishing thing; and yet we may pray for our daily bread; though not after that (b) manner which we must ask spiritual and eternal things: and as for these mercies which are lesse necessary and considerable, we need not be so expresse as to name and particularly condescend on every one of them, for that would be an argument of too great love to them, if we durst take up so much of our time, while we are speaking to God, and would suffer our thoughts to be so far scattered and divided. And it could not but give offence, if while before and with others, we did thus multiply petitions for such things of little use or value; but yet, we must not lay aside or exclude from our prayers, what God hath not excluded out of his promises, though the Lord did not

(b) See col. 27

name them in the promise that we should name them in our prayers, yet there is nothing in the promise which we may not ask, though in a fit and decent manner and order.

(c) *Ibid.*
Obj. 1.

2. (c) *Obj.* The general promise of hearing must be resolved in that *proviso*, that the prayer be for a thing which may warrantably be ask'd; the ground of warrant therefore must be distinct from the promise, and should be originally brought from the precept. *Ans.* There is no promise of audience so particular, but it hath several provisos and limitations, unto which we must advert, lest we make a wrong application, and think we are walking by rule, and sailing to the right harbour, while we are following our own sensual and groundlesse imaginations. We do not plead, that a mistake and wrong glosse of the promise, but that the promise it self, according to the true and genuine meaning, sense and scope of it, is a sufficient warrant to pray for what it holdeth out; and as the promises may be mistaken, so also the precepts, but they leave not off to be a rule because of our error and ignorance. 2. Though we should have our recourse to the precepts for coming to a right up-taking of the promises, yet would not the promises therefore become a secondary rule, and the precept the first and radical warrant. What must be made use of as a mean for understanding any part of Scripture, must not be judged to be the ground and foundation of it. And as to these means, the general helps in expounding of Scripture have here place; we must pray the Lord to open our eyes, that we may see his mind, we must diligently compare Scripture with Scripture, especially general and particular promises together; and the returns that have been made to the prayers of the Saints in accomplishing of them, may give not a little light, &c. But how the commands (to which we are only sent in the objection) can be such a proper mean and help, I see not; the precepts holding out our duty, and the promises our reward; which two are very different.

3. *Obj.* (d) *Abraham* prayed for *Sodom*, *Gen.* 18. *Moses* for *Israel*, *Exod.* 32. *Paul* for the conversion of the *Jews*, *Rom.* 10. 1. And we should pray for all men. 1.

Tim.

Tim. 2. 1. Yea, for persecuting enemies; *Mat. 5. 44.* But there is no promise made to such prayers. *Ans.* This Objection doth not conclude that which is in controversy; its one thing to say, that the promise is the alone and adequate ground of prayer, so that we may not pray for what we have not a promise; against which this argument may be urged (though to little purpose) and its another thing to say (as we said) that the promise is a sufficient, sure and infallible rule and warrant to pray for what it offereth, Albeit there may be other grounds to pray where that is wanting. Yet it may be a sufficient warrant, though not the sole and only warrant. But, 2. the promise doth extend to every thing that is good; *Pf. 84. 11. Pf. 85. 12. Pf. 34. 10. &c.* And therefore unless these prayers have not some good for their object (and so if they be not sinfull, which none dare affirm, they being commanded of God) they must be grounded upon a promise, and accordingly have met with successe, when the conditions have had place: and as to the instances in the objection. 1. If there had been ten righteous men in *Sodom*, *Abraham* had prevailed, and the whole City had been spared. 2. And the Lord did answer *Moses* his prayer, and did not destroy that stubborn generation, *Exod. 33. 14. 17.* 3. *Pauls* prayer was so far heard, that many Jews were converted; And, 4. many a time have persecuting enemies been reclaimed; and in answer to the prayers of those whom they put to hard sufferings, they have been converted. And as thus, 1. the object of such prayers being good, 2. the successe great (though strange and admirable) So also, 3. the qualification of such prayers, they being poured out in (c) faith, do evidence, that those supplicants did not want a promise for their encouragement.

Thus we may conclude, that precepts and promises are like veins and arteries in the body, they are inseparable and go hand in hand: the promise implying a command (for God did never promise to reward our will-worship; or to give what we should not ask and pray for) and the command is a promise (for he never commanded the seed of *Jacob* to seek his face in vain) the precept sheweth unto us what we should do, and the promise what we may expect and shall receive. The

Lord.

(c) See part. 2. chap. 2.

Lord in the Covenant first and last, out of his meer good pleasure for our encouragement in his work, hath made these two reciprocal and relative; our *doing* and *receiving*, our doing our duty and receiving a gracious reward: and thus the commands and the promises must be no less inseparable, these being nothing else but an intimation and declaration of the former two. It is true, God needed not have indented with us for our hire, while he sent us to work in his vineyard, and we as his creatures had been obliged to obey; but the terms of his Covenant are more sweet and condescending; and now he, who cometh to God in the way of commanded duties, must believe that he shall not want his reward. *Heb.*

11. 6.

And thus the Lord with two strong and golden cords, doth draw and bind us to our duty, 1. by his authority and command, 2. by his mercy and free promises. And O! what suitable affections may these stir up and work in us? the one, reverence and godly fear, and the other, cheerful love and confidence. And from this last consideration we may collect, that the promises are not only a sure and infallible, but also the most proper and direct ground of prayer; for though the precepts be the most proper and immediate rule of doing, and so of prayer as it is a *duty*, and under that general notion; yet the promises are the most proper and only ground of prayer; as it is a *means* for obtaining the desired blessing and mercy (which is the more special, and as I may call it, specific consideration of prayer) and the promises are the only ground of confidence and faith, which is so necessary to the acceptable performance of it.

(f) We use the word providence accord-
ing to the vul-
gar, but least
proper signifi-
cation, which
should rather
be called the
effect of provi-
dence.

(g) Ad Divi-
nam providen-
tiam spectat
non tantum
imperium, sed
etiam dispensa-
tio, verum
etiam divina
vis.

As to the fourth, whether divine (f) providence (taking the word not formally, for the eternal and immutable act of Gods counsel; but *factually*, for the outward and temporary (g) administration; or as it is operative, and by the effect declareth and manifesteth Gods eternal counsel to us.) It may be asked (I say) whether, and how far divine providence may be acknowledged as an intimation and declaration of the preceptive and approving will of God? and so, when and how far it should be made a rule of our *actions* or *prayers*?

And

And albeit this debate and enquiry may seem occasional, because of the affinity between the rule of our actions and prayers, yet without any culpable digression we may speak a little to it in *this*, yet only so much as may help us to a resolution of this quære (which in these late dayes of confusion and oppression was so necessary, when treacherous usurpers had no other plea for justifying their oppression, but their successe and signal (as they called them) victories) *whether we should own, approve and pray for these courses, ways and designs, which we see to be followed with successe; and forsake and pray against these interests and courses, which are tryed with crosse providences and disappointments?* In answer to which, we shall give some few conclusions.

Concl. 1. Successfull providences are comfortable commentaries upon these Scriptures that clearly hold forth our duty; if while we are walking by rule, being set a work by the authority of God held forth in the word of command, and encouraged by the word of promise, God smileth upon us by his work; as it will add oyl to the wheels and quicken our diligence, so it will be as eye-salve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see more clearly; it will add light, and prevent needlesse fears and scruples, which might arise from sense and carnal reason, in case of disappointment and crosse dispensations. Thus *Cato* (who at first was a resolute asserter of divine providence) seeing *Pompey* so often prosper when his cause was bad, and miserably overthrown by *Cæsar* while his cause was good, and (b) himself so unsuccessfull in his essayes to maintain and recover the liberty of the Roman state, he then judged, that the world was governed by fortune and hap. And not Pagans only, but some eminent Saints have been sore put to it, and have succumbed at this temptation; from thence *Jobs* friends did infer, that he was an hypocrite; and *David* said, *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*, *1 Sam. 27. 1.* Yea, *Asaph* is not far from blasphemy, *Ps. 73. 12, 13, 14.*

(b) See *Robinson on Exod. chap. 19.*

Concl. 2. Providence is a bad commentary upon a dark Scripture; when the rule is questioned, we must not run to Gods works as interpreters of his Word; when Scripture is pretended

(i) PL 73. 14.

(k) Cannot
morally, though
physically is
bath. dispensa-
tions of provi-
dence, cannot
enlighten the
eyes of the
mind, though
by miracu-
lous dispen-
sation the bodily
eye hath been
restored to the
blind.

(l) Thus the
sectaries when
they invaded
this land an.
1650. made an
appeal to pro-
vidence, and
after the defeat
of our army at
Dunbar they
insulted, that
providence had
determined the
controversie on
their side.

pretended by both parties for their cause, we should not make providence the glosse for clearing what difficulty was in the text, and give sentence for that cause which is followed with successe, and against them, who all the day (i) long, are plagued, and chastened every morning. Providence may encourage a seeing man to walk forward, but (k) cannot either give eyes to the blind, or make a dim eye see clearly: It may be compared to ciphers which serve to augment the number, when a significant note is set before them; but otherwise a 1000 ciphers cannot amount to the least of numbers. When successe followeth a promise made to a commanded duty, its a new bond and encouragement to continue in well-doing; but when it goeth alone, or before, and would draw Scripture along with it, to give an eccho and report to what providence is thought to say and cry, it will prove a poor warrant to him who is unbyassed.

And as successe will not justify an action or course otherwise questionable, so we can have no (l) warrant to appeal to providence in our undertakings; and make it a judge to determine any contraversion. This were to oblige the Lord to give us a new rule, and to make his works speak what he never commanded them to say; this were to limit the Lord, that he might never chasten his people while they had to do with unjust and self-seeking men, and when they owned a good cause; &c. Thus providence must only be esteemed a commentary for amplification of a clear text, but not for explication of what is abstruse and difficult.

Concl. 3, far lesse must providence be acknowledged to be declarative of the approving will of God. 1. Without the word, when such a way and course can lay no claim to any precept or promise: and yet lesse, 2. when it is directly contrary to the word, and therein condemned. And its observable that such as boast of providence, are men who (albeit if we look to their profession we would judge them to be saints, yet) make little conscience of duty, and that they run not to Gods works for a testimony, till first they have cast his word behind their backs, and are at a losse there. Such

we have no other plea for justifying their wayes, judge (it
 their wisdom to make use of this rather than of none; especially
 since it is a popular and sensible demonstration, which
 often proveth more concludent with the brutish multitude, ^(m) *As in the*
 then the word of God; especially if there be a ^(m) continued *late case while*
 series and succession of favourable Providences, and that not *Scorvies did*
 withstanding of many and great intervening difficulties; *profer for so*
 O! (will the multitude then say) this is the hand of God, *long a time.*
 we may see the Lord owning and working for such courses
 and wayes: but certainly such as lean to such a rule, must
 either be very blind, or wilfully blindfold themselves: all
 ages and interests may furnish many instances for showing
 the crookednesse and inequality of this pretended rule: and
 who is he; (whether he be good or bad) who hath observed
 the severall steps of providence towards himself, who cannot
 tell of the many and various vicissitudes of providence he hath
 met with? and the Scriptures afford so many examples of
 crosse-providences towards the Saints while they have been
 following their duty, and maintaining a just cause, and of
 prosperous and successfull dispensations towards the wicked
 in their oppression, injustice and violence against the Saints,
 that it were lost labour to stay upon citations. And O!
 what grosse and abominable absurdities would follow, if pro- ⁽ⁿ⁾ *Carum su-*
 vidence were set up as a ⁽ⁿ⁾ rule? Then treason, rebellion, *cessibus opo,*
 theft, murder, oppression, &c. would lose their name, and *quisquis ab e-*
 become good and commendable, when they are accompanied *ventu fallano-*
 with success; and conscience of duty, religion, loyalty, *sanda pias*
 self-defence against usurping and oppressing invaders, &c. *Ovid. 2 Epist.*
 must be accounted sinfull and unlawfull, when unsuccessful.
 And thus if we make providence our Bible, and seek our rule
 from thence, we must condemne the generation of the
 righteous and blesse them whom the Lord abhorreth; yea and
 the Godly must be accounted too rash, if they set themselves
 to do never so necessary and commendable a work, unless
 they be assured (which without a revelation cannot be) that
 their undertaking shall be accompanied with success, and if
 the vilest miscreant did design never so wicked an enterprise.
 we might not dissuade or rebuke him, if he can show us how

(o) Guil,
Camb. in Hi-
derus pag
(mibi) 790.
latrocinari
prees ad Deum
fundunt, ut pre-
da offeratur,
& pradam pro
munere à Deo
oblatam arbi-
trantur; neq;
vim, neque
rapinam, neque
homicidium,
Deo displicere
persuadentur;
nequaquam il-
lum velle sibi
hanc occasio-
nem prabere si
peccarent, imo
peccatum esse, si
occasionem non
arripissent: hac
Camb. ex J.
Good.

he shall accomplish it: and thus the wild Irish must become excellent casuists, who (as (o) Cambden reporteth) suppose that a booty is sent to them from God, and that they would sin if they improved not such an opportunity as God did offer unto them: and they do not think that violence, oppression, theft, man-slaughter, &c. displeaseth God; because God would not offer them an opportunity to sin, and yet he openeth a door to them for doing these things, and followeth them with successe.

You will say, the Lord sendeth us to his works as our instructors and monitors, Psa. 19. 1. Psa. 46. 8. Mic. 6. 9, Ait. 10. 17. Rom. 1. 20. 21, &c. Ans. We do not deny that Gods works have a voyce, but for the most part not easily understood, its like the hand-writing upon the wall, which though the Astrologers and Caldeans did see, yet they could not find out the meaning and interpretation of it. Its true that providence is, 1. a sure commentary (as being no other thing but the product and execution) of Gods purposes and decrees, but as Gods decrees are not our rule, so neither any intimation or declaration thereof. As Prophecies and predictions, which show us what God purposeth to do or permit, are not, (as we have heard); so neither providences which declare what God hath done or permitted to be done: the one holdeth out to us the object of Gods decrees as future, the other as present or past; and so if the former be not a warrant for us to do, neither can the latter justify what we have done. 2. Though providence cannot discover our duty, yet it discovers to us much of God. His works proclaim his glory, his mercy, justice, forbearance, wisdom, power, holynesse, &c. And thus by necessary consequence (though only secondarily and indirectly) they may discover unto us the (p) naturall (as some call it) worship of God, that he is to be feared, obeyed, loved, &c. and upon this account the Gentiles are said to be guiltie, in that while by the creatures, and works of Gods hand they did know him, yet did not worship him accordingly; in that they did not put in practice that lecture concerning the glorifying of God, which the volum of creation and providence

(p) Because the
light of nature
without any im-
mediate revela-
tion, may serve
to discover it.

did hold out unto them. *Rom.* 1. 21, 20. Yea, 3. as to the instituted worship of God, and the duties of the second table, which we ought to perform one towards another, the works of providence do not define, determine and declare what we should do or not do in that kind; and so are an unfit umpire and judge to determine controversies amongst men, or concerning the positive worship of God, and the right maner of glorifying him; yet in that they manifest his eternall power and God-head, *Rom.* 1. 20. they may, 1. in the generall show unto us, that God is to be obeyed in all things he commandeth; though they do not in particular declare what he commandeth, yet supposing that to be known by whatsoever means (though no other be possible but a revelation, whether mediate or immediate, of his will and appointment) the works of Creation and Providence may serve to discover that bond and obligation, (under which we lie as his creatures) to obey whatever he commandeth, notwithstanding of all the pretenses that sense and selfe-interest can alledge to the contrary. And, 2. they may be so far usefull and subservient to us who have the light of the word, for making us come to the knowledge of particulars, that they (especially if they be considerable or not ordinary) may prove to us so many *monitors, items and memento's*, to make us ponder our wayes, and compare them with the right rule: thus the rod is said to cry to the man of wisdom, that he would ponder what is good, and what the Lord requireth of him, that thus he might repent and turn from his evil wayes. *Mic.* 6. 9, 8, 10. &c. And accordingly *Josephs* Brethren hearkned to what the rod said to them, and were convinced of and humbled for an old crime, *Gen.* 42, 21, 22. Thus also mercies are said to speak, and to invite us to repentance. *Rom.* 2. 4. and to bear witness for God and against the wicked wayes of men. *Act.* 14. 17. but alas! many make both Gods rods and mercies become false witnesses, and to speak that which the Lord never appointed them to say; they make mercies sing some pleasant tune for lulling them asleep, and the rod to sound a retreat from the service of God; and with him to say what should ye wait any

(q) *Proverb.*
Sirenum can-
tus, κροκοδει-
λυ δακρυμα,
Crocodili
lachryma.

(r) *Mic. 6. 9.*

(s) *The con-*
clusion is one
and the same,
though the
premises be
much diffe-
rent.

(t) *Viz. the*
religions of
Gods image
and the law
written in
their hearts,
Rom. 2. 14.
25.

longer on the Lord? 2 *King. 6. 33.* Thus *Saul* imagined, that the rod did point out to him the way to *Endor*, 1 *Sam. 28. 7, 15.* thus mercies to such, become (q) *Syrens*, they sing to them till they sink them; and rods become *Crocodiles*, by their teares they draw the passenger from the right way, and then drive him to his ruine. O! beware then least thou mistake the voyce of providence; that thou run not to thy lusts and carnall interest to consult with these, while it sendeth thee to the word: and see thou sit not down satisfied with the streame, which is offered as a guid to lead thee into the fountain; make not the rod say what it cannot, and hath no commission to speak; though it may open the window that the sun-beams may enter in, and anoynt thine eyes that thou mayest see the light; though it point out the fountain, yet light must come from the sun, and water be brought from the right fountain. It cannot testifie (r) *what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee*, without far lesse contrary to, the Word; it may be an additional and cumulative, but must not be made a solitary witness. The Lord hath warned thee, that if thou make it bear witness to the goodness or badness of an action or cause, or concerning his approving or disapproving will, that it will prove a lying and false witness, *Eccles. 9. 1, 2. Eccles. 8. 14, &c.* He recalleth thee from following such a blind guide, and sendeth thee to that sure and infallible rule, *His laws and testimonies*, as absolute arbiters to judge and determine what is light, what darkness, and what right, what wrong, *Isa. 8. 20.* And wo to him that dare add unto the Word of God, and set up another rule, as if it alone were not compleat, perfect and sufficient, *Prov. 30. 6. Rev. 22. 18. Deut. 4. 2. Deut. 12. 32.* And here Papists and Sectaries, these two great extremes, do meet and joy together in accusing (though upon far different (s) grounds and pretences) the Word of God, of insufficiency and imperfection. Oh! let us pity poor Pagans, who have nor mother Bible wherein to read the mind of God, and whence to learn their duty, except the works of God (t) within and without them. And let us more thankfully improve the Word of truth communicated to us, then to ser-

up in its room, another rule of our own devising, and (x) prepare our selves to the barrel at the uncertain found of that trumpet.

But not minding to prosecute this point any further, we grant, that providence should be the matter of *praise*, and a motive to *confession*, but must not be set up for a rule to our *prayers* and *supplications*: we should blesse God when he prospereth our (x) lawfull endeavours; and when he crosseth our sinfull wayes and stampeth them with some mark of his displeasure, we should take with our guiltiness; when he sendeth out his storm, its time for sleeping *Jonah* to awaken, to strike sail and turn.

It may here be enquired, if in our personal cases, any light may be received from providential encouragements and discouragements? and it must be remembered, that this question is not propounded concerning duty and sin, and what is in it self, and *in specie*, lawfull and unlawfull; having already spoken to that quarter, and shewn, that we have no other judge for determining that controversie, but the law and the testimony: But the present question is only to be extended to things (y) lawfull, which of themselves are indifferent; and which (if we abstract from circumstances of persons, time, place, &c.) may without sin be either done or left undone, whether or not in such a case the dispensations of providence may be made use of for clearing of scruples and difficulties concerning expediency and inexpediency, a call or want of a call to do, *his & ours*; so that what was only in the general, and *permissively* (that I may so speak) lawfull, may by a call and invitation from providence, become good and expedient, and so in particular lawfull, *with & in this exercitol*, he hath provided to be done by me at such and such a time.

For answer to it. It will not be denyed, that to observe these signs and secrets, which ignorant and deluded creatures do more carefully mark and reverence then the commandments, promises or threatenings of the Word, is abominable and Pagan like superstition. Thus, if some in their way meet such a call or person, they will not prosper in that

(a) 1 Cor. 14. 8

1st (5)

2. ed. 1778

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(2) *Vil.*
Cicer. lib. 2.
de divinat.
(2) 1 Tim.
2. 26.

that journey, &c. Ah! how should Christians be ashamed to observe such *lying vanities*, since the very (2) heathens have condemned this madness and folly; which may be called Sathans *A. B. C.* the first rudiments he teacheth his disciples, whom at length he leadeth (4) captive at his will: And as the devil will be busie, and do what he can to make the event answer these ridiculous prefigurations, so God in judgment to those who observe such vanities, may suffer it to be so, for hardning them in their delusion. But O! what blindness and superstition must it be to divine and prognosticate the event of enterprises from such providential occurrences as have no influence upon, nor connexion with such a business and undertaking? And they, who do not value or observe such lying signs, will find them to prove as false in their threatnings and promises concerning the futuration of events, as they are unable, unfit and disproportionat; yea, ridiculous and altogether impertinent for effectuating and bringing them to passe. But since *the bell must clink what the fool doth think*, No wonder though he *can spell what is doth knelt*. Certainly such Dreamers have justified the presumptuous Astrologers and Star-gazers; for albeit they dare undertake to read in the great ordinances of the heavens, what the Lord never wrote in them; yet there be many lineaments in that great and glorious volum, which the most intelligent cannot discern, and the Astrologers may see (but they will not content themselves with that sight) some natural connexion of causes and effects, and where they cannot perceive that clearly, yet there may be some ground for a probable conjecture; but there no essay can be made, neither is there the least ground to enquire after any connexion, dependance, or causality between the symbol and the thing signified.

Neither, 2. will it be denyed to be rash and unwarrantable, for any man now to desire and expect a miraculous dispensation; and to say with (b) *Gideon, shew me a sign*? And albeit the Saints sometimes have such a thought suggested to them, yet they should reject it, as a temptation coming from him, who can transform himself into an Angel of light, that he may draw us to the paths of darkness. But yet the hand

(b) Judg. 1
6. 37.

of *Isab.* is not alwayes discerned, especially in the sight of dejection. Thus that religious Lady *Gregoria*, being much disquieted about her salvation, writes to *Gregory*, that she would not cease to importune him till he received a revelation from heaven that she should be saved; to whom he well replied, that she did ask an (a) hard and unprofitable thing; for though I did receive (saith he) yet how should I be able to certifie thee that I had received a revelation. Thus also that English (d) Gentlewoman, who being under exercise of conscience, said to the Minister sitting by her, *If I must be saved, let this Venice glasse be kept from breaking while I throw it against the wall.* And though the Lord would not break this bruised reed, but would rather work a miracle, yet his wonderfull condescension doth not excuse her rashness, and she was justly rebuked by the Minister for her sin. *Luther* his practice was most heroick and observable, who being (as he (e) confesseth) often tempted to ask signs and revelations from heaven to confirm him in that way, which was at the first so solitary and full of dangers, protested he would have no visions or miracles; but would take Gods word revealed in the Scriptures for all. And no lesse considerable was the carriage of that holy old man, to whom (as *Gerson* (f) reporteth) *Sathan* appeared in a most glorious maner, professing himself to be *Christ*, and that he appeared unto him because of his exemplary holiness; to whom that experienced servant of *Christ* quickly replied; *I am not so curious as to desire a sight of my Saviour here on earth; it shall suffice me, to see and enjoy him hereafter in heaven;* withall addeth this pathetick ejaculation, *O Lord (g) let a sight of thee in another world, be my reward.*

Yet, 3. if the Lord should appear in any extraordinary work of providence, we must not slight or despise such a dispensation: It hath a voice and doth cry, and we should hearken and observe what it saith; I say not we should welcome *Anti-christ*, though he come with signs and lying wonders, *2 Thes. 2. 9.* and that we should believe another Gospel, though preached by an Angel from heaven, *Gal. 1. 8.* we having a more sure word of prophecy whereunto we must

take

(c) *Rem diffi-
cilem populus
& inuulsum
&c.*

(d) See
Clerks mir-
rour. chap. 12
§ 20. Edit. 2.
ann. 1634.

(e) *Passum
feci cum Do-
mino Deus meo
ne miri m-
tati, &c.*

(f) *Gerl. de
probatione spi-
rituum.*

(g) *Sit in alio
seculo non in
hoc mundo
metui meo.*

take heed, 2 Pet. 1. 19. when we have the light of the Word for our direction, we must not stay or alter our course for any dispensation of providence, although extraordinary and wonderfull; yet, we should not altogether slight such rare and astonishing works of God; they speak to us and we should ponder what they say; they are our talents, and we should improve them: we should re-view our wayes, and warrant, that if we be following duty, we may, from such a reflection, strengthen our selves, and guard our hearts against that temptation which the Lord hath sent (as that sign and wonder of the false Prophet, *Deut* 12. 1, 2, 3.) to prove us; but if upon examination we come to see that our course is wrong, and that we have been set a work upon some mistake, and that our zeal hath been without knowledge; let us then thank God for it, and turn at that warning. We have a considerable instance hereof in those Jews, who at the command of *Julian* the Apostat, did essay to build again the Temple at *Jerusalem*, against whom the Lord appeared by so many (*b*) signs of his displeasure in these strange dispensations, first a great tempest of winds and thunder, and terrible earthquakes swallowing up the new-laid foundation of the Temple, together with the instruments and materials they had prepared for the work; and though thereby they were a little stoppt, yet they will make a second attempt: And then behold, 2. a fire rising from the foundation they were laying, which continuing for a dayes space, did consume the new work, the work-men, and what necessaries they had again provided for the work; and while (*a*) some report they will not yet desist, but will make the third essay, behold a crosse appearing in the air, and in their garments, which all their washing could not wipe away; which strange dispensations, as they did so far work upon them all, as to make them leave off to prosecute that design any further, so they did prevail with some to fall upon an impartial examination of their way, whereby they were led in to see their error; and taking that warning as coming from God, did immediately give up their names to Christ. The Lord's hand is not now shewnd that it cannot work as in the dayes of old, when it seemeth good to

This is T. 2.
Cate. 48. 111.
an. 111. 111.

an. 111. 111.
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(b) Claver.
bist. epis. pag.
(mibi) 365.
Pat. Symon,
bist. of the ch.
Emp. in Julia-
na, 111. 111.

(i) Vid. Luc.
Ohand. bist.
eccl. cont. 4.
an. 111. 111.
an. 111. 111.
an. 111. 111.

him, he yet worketh wonders in the earth: But, though now it be more rare to meet with such signs and wonders, yet, there may be such a series and combination of ordinary dispensations, as may deserve our serious consideration, and the effect and product may seem strange and astonishing. O! but let us take heed lest we be deceived by the working of Sathan, that his signs and lying wonders beget not in us strong delusions, and turn us not from the way of righteousness, 2 *Thess.* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12.

4. As for ordinary dispensations, we have no warrant from the Scriptures, or the practice of the Saints, to lay too much weight on them, or to expect light and direction from them. And as it were a tempting of God to appeal to providence, and the event and success of our undertakings for their justifiableness; So it were no less rash and unwarrantable, foolish and dangerous, to be led by invitation from providence, and to wait for that before we set forth. The Lord might justly make thee meet with disappointment in the issue, when success and a smiling providence, in the beginning, was the motive that led thee on.—If thou wilt not knock till the door be opened, thou mayest wait long and by without, while all within was in readiness to have welcomed and kindly entertained thee; and if thou be too confident in a promising opportunity, he may send some blast in thy teeth to make thee strike sail, and cause thy vessel return to the harbour empty. *Hamans* promotion and moeyen with the King did prove a step in his way to the gallows, his advancement made him proud and became an occasion of his ruine, *Esth.* 3. 5. and 7. 10. and *Joseph's* fetters and imprisonment did lead to his advancement; *Joseph* must be sold as a slave before he be a Father to *Pharaoh* and Lord of all his house, *Gen.* 45. 7, 8.

Yet, 5. we dare not simply condemn the observation of the ordinary works of providence, and generally conclude, that no use may be made of these for light and direction in our way. But, to determine and set bounds here, and say, *thus far may we go and no further*, and at such a time and occasion and no other, is no small difficulty, *hoc opus, hic labor est*; and knowing none who have gone before us in this enquiry,

We shall take the more heed to our steps, and, in modesty and with submission, offer some few particulars, which may occasion a more full disquisition by others. 1. Then, although it be certain that we should commend our wayes to God, asking light and direction from him in every business we put our hands to, that he would hold us (as he did that holy man, Ps. 73. 23, 24.) by the right hand, and guide us by his counsel; yet, we cannot expect an extraordinary revelation, or to hear a voice from heaven pointing out our way. Neither, 2. must we imagine, that the Lord will blind-fold our understanding, and violently draw us; But that, 3. he will deal with us in a sure and convenient way, making use of congruous means for perswading and alluring reasonable creatures to follow, or to reclaim them from such and such wayes and courses. And thus he doth direct us by suggesting to us, or bringing to our memories, such motives and arguments as will prevail with us, and offering to our consideration such dispensations as may have influence upon our judgment, and help us to right purposes and resolutions.

And to say that we should not thus ponder and improve such works of providence, is in effect, 1. to deny that we should take notice of Gods care, and what our kind Father doth for us. And, 2. to say that we should not make use of our reason, nor lay hold upon what opportunity the Lord doth offer unto us, and thus to give carnal men the advantage of Christians, as to the observation and right improvement of providence: For, though such take little notice of his hand, yet they observe his work, and what price he putteth into their hands; and will not be so foolish as to walk in that (k) way they see hedged up with thornes, nor to slight any promising opportunity calling them to enter in at an open door.

But, 2. we must not lay so much weight upon providential occurrences, as to make them the alone or main guide in our consultations; for, if there be much lying at the stake, a contrary blast must not hinder us in our course: when we must buy and the market will not last, we should not say the day is not fair: and if God called me to go from home, he would

(k) Remember the question is not concerning sin and duty, but expediency and in expediency.

would make the Sun to shine upon me. Ah! fool, thy necessity doth call thee to go, but the Lord doth not promise to bind up the clouds while thou art on the way.

Yet, 3. if the Lord, by some special, remarkable or unexpected providence, doth, as it were, cross our way, or open a door formerly shut, and that after thou hast been a supplicant at the Throne for direction and success; thou mayest, with some cautions, look upon such a dispensation as sent by way of return to thy prayers. If, 1. thou canst say, that thou hast respect to all God's Commandments, and labourest to approve thy self to him in thy whole conversation; if thou makest conscience of thy wayes, and art not a stranger to a spiritual and close communion with God, so that thou hast not now gone to him in a fit and good mode, or while thou art in a strait; and as it is thy constant course to commend thy wayes to him, so thou trustest and dependest on him, and if, while thou art living in a dependance on him, and waiting for an answer in a grave and weighty business that deserveth thy serious consideration, and much deliberation, he send thee such a dispensation, thou mayest look upon it as a warning and message from the Lord. But, 2. be not too rash, but wait a while; go to him again and ask his help and assistance to make a right use of that dispensation. And, 3. in the mean time thou mayest take a view of the motives which may induce thee to undertake such a business, or may draw thee off; and what may be the consequences of the having or wanting such a supposed mercy, &c. And if in thy inquiry and consultation, thou findest nothing from thence to counter-balance the impression which that dispensation hath made upon thy spirit, but rather much to second and concur with it; and thus findest the Lord inwardly to back and carry that work home upon thy heart, and make it as a strong cord to draw thee, who formerly was in some sort of suspence, not knowing what hand to turn thee to, thou mayest with some confidence say, *Now I see the Lord making good his word to me, in bringing the blind by a way he knew not, and making darkness light before him,* Isa. 42. 16. But remember, though the present case be con-

(n) Prov.
28. 1.

cerning expediency and in expediency, gain and losse, outward advantage and disadvantage, yet not simply (as if there were no more to be enquired after) but in reference to the sanctified use thereof, as it may be a mean and help to us in glorifying the giver, and for working out our own salvation, O but whatsoever dispensation would draw us aside from the holy commandment, and would lead us to any sinfull way; let us not hearken to it, but let us reject and abominat it as a temptation. The (19) righteous must be bold as a Lyon, and with resolution set himself against all mountains of opposition, not hearkening to the voice of any *work* that would stop his ears from hearing and obeying Gods *word*.

(m) See
Astr. 2.

4. As we have no warrant to ask, and upon every occasion to expect such weighty and remarkable dispensations, so to value too (m) much, and to be led by ordinary occurrences and common dispensations of providence, were foolishly to bind our selves with fetters of our own making, and superstitiously to set up, and follow a directory of our own devising, and with our own hands to plait a net for catching our selves, and to wreath a yoke about our own necks; and those who are so far deluded as to walk by such a rule, would rather be an object of compassion then derision, as being infatuated and given over to the hight of folly and delusion.

But, 5. that which seemeth to be most intricate in this question, is, whether or not it be lawfull with *Abrahams* servant to pray, that the Damsel, who shall say, drink and I will draw water for thee and thy Camels also, may be the woman thou hast appointed for thy servant. *Isaac*, Gen. 24. 14. And with *David* to say, *If he speak thus, thy servant shall have peace*, 1 Sam. 20. 7. And if with *Jonathan* we may conclude, that, *if they say come up unto us, we will go up, for the Lord hath delivered them into our hands*, 1 Sam. 14. 9, 10. We did not enquire, if with these Pagan priests and forcerers, 1 Sam. 6. 9. And with *Timotheus*, 1 Maccab. 5. 40. we might go to the devil (as the custom and superstition of these men, and the event answering their sign doth shew they did) to ask a sign from him. Neither, 2. did we enquire if we might (with *Gideon*, Judg. 6. 36.) desire that

that the dew should be on our fleece, while it is dry upon all the earth; because such a sign is altogether impertinent, and hath no connexion with the end for which it was sought, and is of it self miraculous, and so may not without an extraordinary call and warrant be desired and ask't; but we did enquire, if it be lawfull to desire and pray the Lord to make some ordinary dispensation, having some connexion with the present business, a sign for discovering his purpose concerning the event of such a business, and our call to go about it. For *Ans.* 1. None will be so rash as to condemn those holy men, who no doubt in this were directed by some extraordinary instinct of the Spirit of God. But, 2. since the persons were eminent and not in an ordinary condition, and directed by a special (we will not say revelation, yet) impulse and motion, their practice must not be look't upon as a general rule and pattern, which we may imitate upon every occasion. Yet, 3. we dare not so limit the servants of God as to say, that in no case they may take such a course, and make use of those examples, if these cautions were observed, 1. if the person be eminent in holiness, 2. under some great tryal and strait, so that the case is grave, weighty and intricate, 3. when he findeth a more then ordinary motion and impulse, stirring him up to take that course, and pointing out the particular dispensation he is to seek for a sign, 4. that he be not peremptory in his desire, but seeketh such a sign with submission; so that he will not grudge or repine, if he meet not with such a dispensation, or if it be given, yet the event doth not answer: otherwise we must tempt God, and limit the holy one, by binding him to a sign of our choosing, while we had no command to require that dispensation, or warrant to set it up for a mark, and no promise that the event should answer it. 5. This must not be done, 1. out of pride, as if thou wert a none-such, and might expect and ask from God that which others might not. Nor, 2. of curiosity to try the Lord, and put him to it by thy conceit. Neither, 3. out of diffidence, as it were in vain to wait any longer upon God, if he give not such a pledge of his love and care. Neither, 4. out of rashness, or in every trifling business, but deliberately, and upon
some

some weighty ground and special consideration. Neither, 5. must such a one boast, and be too confident in that dispensation he pitched upon for a sign, though it be given, he should not promise too much of it, but patiently wait till he see if the event doth answer his expectation; and in the mean time, he should beware least his impatience, or vain confidence in that he hath met with, do not intercept and hinder the accomplishment. 6. After he hath seen the event to answer his desire and expectation, that it may prove a blessing, he should, 1. be humble, 2. be thankfull, and, 3. beware that he make not a wrong use of this rare dispensation, and set it not up as a preparative for ordinary cases, and be not from thence encouraged to follow the like course, while he is not placed in the like circumstances. If these and such like conditions be observed, we dare not peremptorily condemn such a practice, and deny that the Saints may at any time say (with him, *Pf*, 86. 17.) *show me a token for good*. As there is no ground to think, that *David* there did ask an extraordinary and miraculous sign, so neither to affirm that he had some extraordinary and special warrant to put up such a desire. I know that our Divines do generally conclude, that it is unlawfull and a tempting of God to ask a sign from him without som special warrant and revelation. But they may be interpreted to speak of miraculous, or impertinent signs, which have no connexion with the event; or if of such signs also to which we did limit the question, then they have not absolutely and universally condemned such a practice, but when it is not so qualified according to the conditions and proviso's held forth in our resolution, Thus (n) *Amesius* (though once and again he seemeth to speak as peremptorily against this course, as any I have read, yet) (o) granteth, that Believers may sometimes, without any speciall inspiration or instinct (such as he had been speaking of, *Sol*. 17.) seek a sign from God in some necessary and intricate case, and for confirmation, alledgeth *Abrahams* practice, *Gen*. 15. 8. which upon examination will be found to hold out (if it be acknowledged for a rule) more then we have granted.

(n) *Amesius*.
Cas. cons. lib.
 4. cap. 23. &
Med. theol.
lib. 2. cap. 11.
 § 18. & cap.
 12. § 17, 18.
 &c.

(o) *Signum a*
Deo petere
humiliter cir-
ca aliquod
particulari ne-
cessarium, quod
alias non est
a Deo suffi-
cienter mani-
festum, potest
aliquando fide-
lis aliquis sine
peccato, Med.
theol. lib. 2.
cap. 12. § 18.
 18.

6. It may be enquired, if in our several straits and exigencies, we may run to the Scriptures, and set up that for a rule that first occurreth, if pertinent to our case? and if we should look on what it saith, or may be from it collected as a call to us to do or not do, and to do thus or thus? *Ans.* As it is certain, 1. that we may commend our case to God and ask direction from him; 2. that we should reflect upon such passages of the word as relate to our case, and may give light to us; So, 3. I think that it were too rash and cruel peremptorily to condemn the practice of some experienced Christians, who while in suspense, and not knowing what hand to turn, have had their recourse to the Scriptures, letting their anchor fall where the Lord in his providence did lead, who thus at a venture have met with a suitable and pertinent word: Yet, 4. we grant that it is not easie to determine what use should be made of such a word; for albeit sin and duty be clearly revealed in the Word, yet expediency and in expediency, a call to do or not do, *hic & nunc*, could not (because of the multitude and variety of circumstances) be particularly there determined. And this case seemeth to be much like the former, there being here a sign (as it were) sought from Gods *Word*, as there by his *work*; and so observing the directions set down there, we may make the like use of that passage of Scripture, which might be made of that dispensation: yet (as it would appear) we have a greater liberty here, and we may with lesse hazard of tempting the Lord, run to his word, then to any of his works; he having appointed the former and not the latter, to be our (p) rule (though not properly as to this, yet in another case) and therefore it would seem, that we may more confidently in every case run to it for direction, then to the other. Yet here also there may be several mistakes and errors; as curiosity, rashness, pride, a mistake and mis-application of the Word; superstition, by laying more weight on that passage then it will bear, extending it beyond its light and direction, and looking after something by way of a sign, in that the Lord hath offered a Word suitable and pertinent to our case. Ab thou simple and rashly confident I know, though that
Word

(p) Gods
 works in no
 sense are a pro-
 per rule, but
 his Word is,
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 universally and
 properly as to
 our case, is not
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 ned there: al-
 beit we must
 reflect on the
 general rules
 held forth in
 the Word, in
 our consultation,
 and must
 walk by them.

Word may speak of a case much like to thine, and hold out a word which thou wouldst lay hold on, yet it may hold out no warrant for thee, either to do or not to do, and no ground from which thou mayest conjecture concerning the event. But otherwise, O! what light, direction, comfort and encouragement have the servants of God met with from such passages of Scripture, as the Lord in his providence hath occasionally offered; from thence they have seen and learned what formerly they did not see, or not ponder or regard: O! Christian, hast thou tried this course? dost thou run to the Word when other counsellors fail thee? and canst thou not from thine own experience put to a seal to this truth? *The Word of God enlighteneth the eyes, and maketh wise the simple*, Psal. 19. 7, 8. Hitherto we have especially spoken of a transient occasion, and what use may be made of providence for a right improvement thereof, in reference to some particular act or end. Now let us add a word for discovering how far providence may be helpfull for constituting us into a permanent state and relation; and here we must only speak of such a state and condition, as falleth under our choice; for otherwise we need not wait for a call, nor enquire after a warrant, we being already determined and placed into such a condition, and standing already under such and such a relation, which obligeth us to the performance of such and such duties; thus we are born children, subjects, heirs, &c. And here providence doth constitute, and actually and *de facto*, invest and place us into such a station, antecedently and previously to our deliberation, choice and consent. But as to the former case we answer, that providence, albeit it may invite, open a door, and offer a fit occasion for entering into such a place, calling and state as falleth under our election and choice, and where our consent must go before our being invested therein, and some qualifications are required, whether moral (as the consent of, and a call from others who are concerned) or physical, as parts, ability and dexterity to discharge the same aright, though (I say) providence may thus concur, yet it cannot directly, formally, and of its self constitute and instate us into such a place and condition: But as we must

must walk by another rule in the discharging of such a place, so we must have another, and better warrant for our entering upon and undertaking of it; thou must not invade another mans right, though thou hast an opportunity offered for doing it successfully; neither must thou passe over that order and method which the Word of God, and the laudable laws and constitutions of men have appointed, though thou hast no competitor, who can lay any claim or plead a right to such a place: But those steps being observed, providence may be subservient, and in some respect directive, and so far point out thy way, that thou canst not slight that invitation from providence without sin. But still remember, that providence must not go alone, though a providential call be required, yet it is not sufficient. Providence may open a door, at which, if thou enter in, thou must take heed to thy steps, least thou dash thy brains against the lintels of that door. Thou must have a call both from God and man, from within and without, concurring with the call of providence, otherwise thou shouldst not hearken to its voice, as if it seem to call thee 1. to any place or condition not warrantable and lawfull; 2. without the consent and concurrence of them by whom thou shouldst enter; 3. contrary to thy inclination, and for the discharging of which thou art not qualified, &c. But you will say, we cannot expect an extraordinary revelation, but the Lord having appointed in his Word, and in the general determined there what stations and callings are lawfull and what not, he hath left the particular determination thereof to providence; so that we cannot expect to meet with no other call, and thus must think that God by it doth call us to determine and apply the general rules of the Word to such a particular exigence; and finding these to agree, we may judge that joynt testimony to be the voice of God pointing out our way. *Ans.* If by providence be meant all these steps, we must tread in our entry to such a place and station, all the conditions, transactions and qualifications which are required, we do not deny, that the call and invitation of providence, fitting and preparing all these requirers, and opening a door for improvement of them, may suffice for determining

determining and applying to our case the general rules held forth in the Word, and we should look upon it as the call and voice of God, which we should not reject or resist; but if by providence there be not (as usually there is not) any other thing meant, but a fair opportunity of entering into such a place and station with facility and success; thou mayest for thy tryal meet with such an occasion, which thou shouldst not set up as a rule, and make it thy warrant, but shouldst rather resist it as a temptation, and turn away from it as a door set open to sin.

And albeit the law and appointment of God (manifested either in his Word, or by his work on our hearts) be the first radical and regulating principle, which ordaineth, authorizeth and appointeth such and such callings, employments and relations to be amongst men; yet as to the entrance unto, and the investing of such and such persons, in such particular places and stations, a call from man, together with the observance of that order and way appointed by man, is necessary; yea, it is the very basis and foundation, and (as it were) formal reason, which doth install and constitute a person into such a place and under such a relation, so that now he may and ought (while formerly he might not) discharge the several duties belonging to such a place and station, and flowing from such a relation.

We have spoken to this case for the most part in an abstract way, having seldom made any application to the subject matter which occasioned this enquiry; but it is no difficult work to collect from what hath been said, how we should frame our prayers in reference to providential dispensations in so far, as we may not make providence a rule of our actions; neither must we make it a copy and directory for our supplications.

Praise be to him, who hath not left us to such blind and dumb guides, who neither know nor can point out to us the way. Ah! let us pity poor Pagans, who have no other Bible but the volum of creation and providence, which is often sealed so, that they cannot open it and read; and often it is blank, and hath no light to impart, or else its written in such dark

dark characters, that few or none is able to read & understand. Though the works of God do speak, yet they often give an uncertain sound. But we have that clear and sure Word of truth for our direction, which we may safely follow, and whereupon we may securely rest. The Sun-light of one single precept or promise, is of more use for our direction, then the glistering of many constellations of providence. The night is past to us, and though all the stars disappear and hold out no light, yet we on whom the Sun doth shine have no cause to complain, as if we were left in the dark. And as the Word is, 1. a clear, infallible and never-erring rule; so its 2. constant, perpetual and immovable; we need not fear least the Lord abrogate and disannul it: but that same hand of providence, which now holdeth out to us what our hearts desire, may in a moment be lifted up against us; that same hand that now seemeth to open the door, may shut it when he pleaseth, and crush thee, if thou stand in the way.

Sect. 2.

*For what things, and in what order and manner
should we pray?*

THe promise being such a sure ground and foundation of prayer, we may safely go where we see this star point out our way; the promises are not only precious and exceeding great, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. But also (like the (a) commandments) exceeding broad, and of a large extent; they go as far as a rational and sanctified appetite can reach. The will (I confesse) may chuse every (b) good thing, and the promise is of as large a compass. The Lord hath said, that he will give grace and glory, and are not these very large and comprehensive? yet least any should complain, he will leave no room for any exception, but as he hath promised to give these great mercies; so that he will withhold no good thing from his honest servants and supplicants, *Pf.* 84. 11. *Pf.* 34. 9, 10. *Pf.* 23. 1. *Pf.* 85. 12. &c. and that he will preserve them from all evil, *Pf.* 121. 7. that he will preserve their soul, *ver.* 7. and their body, their going out and

(a) *Pf.* 119.
96.

(b) *Bonum est
quod omnia
appetunt.
Arist. Eth. 1.
cap.*

coming in; and that he will not suffer their foot to be moved, ver. 8, 3, 5, 6. Thus the promise excludeth nothing that is good; and I know no good thing, which we may not pray for. *Goodness* by the Philosophers, is thought to be a relative property; and in the Schools that is called *good*, which is fit and *(s) convenient*; which general may to good purpose be applyed to this case in divinity, while we enquire what is good for a Christian, and what he may claim and ask, as being his by vertue of a promise? viz not every thing which his lust doth crave, but every thing that is fit and convenient (and so good) for him: It may be riches, pleasures, honours, &c. would not *hic & nunc*, and at such a season be convenient for him, but would prove a snare; and therefore there is no promise, that we can absolutely and peremptorily plead as a bond for such a supposed mercy. The object of the promise must be some good thing, *bonum tibi*, there can be no promise made to thee, but it must be concerning something which is good and convenient for thee; otherwise, it were rather a threatening then a promise.

O! If all our prayers and desires were thus limited, and did carry alongst with them this *proviso*; we would not be so peremptory in our requests, nor so impatient under a repulse, nor so ready to call in question Gods love and care, and the truth of his promises, when in mercy he refuseth to satisfie our lusts and foolish desires. And O! with what confidence, security and calmness of spirit might we roll our selves, and all our affairs over upon our kind and provident Father? who as he will not withhold what is good, so will not suffer what is evil to come near us. But as thou mayest ask every good, so only what is good: for no evil can be an object of love and desire, but rather of hatred and aversation, and so falleth not under a promise but a threatening: and thus cannot be a fit material for prayer and supplication, but rather for deprecation or imprecation.

But here we might speak to this question, whether we may desire and pray for any evil, whether of sin or suffering, though not absolutely and for it self, yet as it may be a mean for humbling of us, and drawing us near to God? There be

(c) Bonum est ens ut conveniens non sibi (ut ex terminis videtur manifestum) sed alteri: unde Hurtado, ex divisione boni in honestum utile, & delectabile recte colligit, bonum communiter usurpari pro convenienti quia (inquit) honestas utilitas & delectatio dicunt ordinem ad aliud. Hurt. metaph. disp. 7. § 5. § 56.

few of those we have read who propound, and none who at any length do speak to this material (as we conceive) case; but since there be so many particulars, which we must speak to in this Chapter, we shall remit this to Part 3. and handle it amongst the cases. Only let us from thence suppose, that the object of our prayers must be something that is good, fit, convenient and profitable to us, and that not only respectively and in reference to such an end, but also absolutely and of it self, at least negatively and permissively. And thus it must not be evil, either *morally*, or *physically*, it must not (fit self be either dishonourable to God and contrary to his law, or afflictive and bitter to us. But as to what is thus good, thou art not straitned either by the promise, or the nature of this performance; we have both conjoynd and meeting together in this center, or rather diffused through this large circumference, *Mat. 7. 11. Your Father which is in heaven shall give good things to them that ask him.*

We need not descend unto particulars, these being so many and different; whatever thou stands in need of, what ever may be usefull and profitable either for soul or body, for this life or that which is to come, for thy state and calling, for thy present exigence and condition, &c. thou mayest ask in prayer, and plead a promise for the obtaining of it. All which good and desirable things, are summarily comprehended under six heads, in that perfect pattern which our Lord Jesus taught his Disciples, *Mat. 6. 9. Luk. 11. 2.* a commentary and explication whereof, we purpose not to offer now, especially, since that hath been often and fully done by many judicious and learned Divines. But we shall reduce what we judged necessary to add concerning the object of prayer, into two generals, *viz. of things and persons.* Of the first, we shall speak here, and of the second in the following Section.

1. Then as to these good *things* and mercies, which are the matter of prayer; it would be observed, 1. that these are either *temporal*, belonging to our bodily and perishing being in this world, or *spiritual*, which do (d) more immediately concern the soul, and our everlasting being and happiness.

(d) For even these temporal things have a remote tendency, and should by us be referred to such a noble end.

2. Both

2. Both spiritual and temporal mercies may be sub-
 vided, for some of them are more, some lesse necessary for
 obtaining the aforesaid ends ; as amongst spirituales, some
 are necessary for our being and spiritual life, others only for
 our greater comfort, vigor and activity in doing ; so amongst
 temporals, some are necessary for our bodily being and life,
 others only for the comfort, better accommodation and emo-
 lument thereof. And accordingly the promises do, and our
 desires and prayers should in a different maner respect these
 objects. For clearing of which (as being the main scope of
 this Section) we shall lay down some few positions, beginning
 with temporals ; and as to these, first, laying the foundation,
 and shewing that they may be lawfully askt, before we
 speak of the maner how they should be askt.

Concl. 1. We need not fear to go to our Father for a sup-
 ply of all our wants, as well outward and bodily, as spiritu-
 al. Thus our blessed Lord, in that perfect pattern of prayer,
Mat. 6. 11. *Luk.* 11. 3. hath taught us to *ask our daily*
bread ; and *Agur* by his example, *Prov.* 30. 8. doth war-
 rant us to *pray for good convenient* ; and the Apostle exhor-
 teth us to make our *requests known unto God in every thing*,
Phil. 4. 6. And there be so many promises concerning these
 outward things, and so many instances of prayers put up by
 the Saints, registred in the Word ; especially in the book of
 the Psalms, that it were not worth the time to insist upon
 citations ; having the constant practice, of all the Saints, as
 daily memorials of our duty, and as so many torches to shew
 us our way. Yea, this seemeth to be one, and not the least
 of these reasons, why the Lord doth subject and expose us to
 so many wants and dangers, that we may run to him for
 a supply of our wants, and for protection from the evil we
 fear ; and we should look upon these, as so many messengers
 sent to invite us (as the famine did the prodigal) to draw
 nigh to our Father. We will not now digress to confute the
 old Manicheans, who affirmed, that only these temporal and
 outward things were promised in the old Testament ; with
 whom in this (e) Socinians and (f) Arminians do joyn, al-
 beit some of them would mitigate the mater by their distincti-

(e) Cateches.
 Raccov. cap.
 5. per totum.
 Socin. practi-
 theol. cap. 17.
 & com. in
 epist. Joan. p.
 207, 210.
 Orlor. inst.
 vel. Christi i. a.
 cap. 22. usque
 ad 34. Smalc.
 de div. fesi.
 Ch. cap. 5. p.
 37, 35, 26.
 &c.
 (f) Remonst.
 apolog. pag 26
 & conf. cap.
 20, 11. Sim.
 Episcop. disp.
 21. de sadere
 Dei, theol. 4.
 & disp. de
 corum. &
 disci. vel. &
 nov Test. theol.
 5, 20, 21, &c.

ons, while they tell us, that the Scriptures of the old Testament do expressly and directly speak only of temporals, so that the people of the Jews could not understand, nor collect from thence any ground for bekeving a life eternal: As if God had only proposed to that people a swinish and Turkish felicity. Neither will we now meddle with these hereticks (whom (g) Theophylact calls *Masselians*, and *Augustine*, *Psalians*, who on the other hand do teach, that we should not labour or care for temporal and outward things; hence it would appear, that they did teach that we should not pray for them: were it not that (h) *Augustine* tells us, that they belong to the Sect of the *Euchists*, who pleaded, (but I am sure not by their practice) that men ought alwayes, and without intermission to pray; and then surely no object, whether temporal or spiritual, must be excluded from those perpetual prayers: And yet what we may not some one way or another care for (especially as to those things that requite our labour and endeavour for obtaining of them) that we may not (I would think) pray for. But in opposition both to Manicheans and (i) *Masselians*, let us lay down this sure conclusion; That godliness alwayes was, and still is profitable for all things, having the promises for things belonging both to this bodily perishing life, and for that eternal life of glory, which is to come, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. Its true, the antient people had many particular promises of earthly things, which we cannot lay claim to. The Church then being in her infancy, was accordingly left under an elementary pedagogy, and had a greater allowance of sensible and outward mercies, as being more sutable to their condition: as their ordinances were more (k) carnal, consisting for a great part in externals, and in outward bodily performances; so the promises and motives to obedience, accordingly did more respect their outward state and condition here in the world, then now under the Gospel, when we (being liberate of the yoke of these bodily rites and ceremonies, and light having arisen to us after these (l) shadows are gone) have more spiritual duties, and more pure motives and encouragements. Not that their performance were not also spiritual, and as if these types had not

(g) Theop.
pny. Job. 196.
pny. an. 1533.
in Jon. 6. 27.
August. de
heres. b. cap.
57. Psalliani
pro Messaliani
scriptum est
corruptissimum
inquit L. Da-
natus in locum
August. &
rationes quas
subjicit viden-
tur probabiles,
sed Theophy-
lactus, ut
monuit vocat
hos hereticos
Messalianos.
(h) Aug. loc.
cit. Euchistæ &
Masseliani
significabunt
sane eundem, et
one word be-
ing as to its
original Syri-
ack, and be-
other Greek,
vid Danzwin,
loc. cit.
(i) Those
whom Theo-
phylact calls
Masselians,
others most
usually call
Messalianæ.
(k) Heb. 7.
16. and 9. 101
(l) Cant. 1.
2. 17.

poiated.

(n) *anguis
maritimum so-
men ecclesia.*
(n) Thom.
a. 9. 83. art.
4. in corp.
Omnes orati-
ones nostras or-
dinari debent
ad gratiam &
gloriam con-
sequendam qua
solus Deus dat
&c. & Cajet.
in locum ne-
gas orationem
non ordinatam
ad consecutio-
nem gratia
esse simpliciter
orationem, vel
actum religio-
nis.
(c) Guido de
Ba. super
decreto, part.
1. dist. 91. §
Presbyteris, ait
sola eterna
petenda esse,
decens enim
est (inquit)
& rationabile
ut ista petan-
tur a Deo &
non transito-
ria & caduca,
sed part. 2.
causa 12. q. 1.
S. habebat, doc-
et temporalia
esse petenda,
et quomodo
& in quem fi-
nem. vid.
loc.

pointed out Christ, whom they were to eye in all sacrifices washings, &c. But because the manner of performance was much conversant about the outward man, and sensible things, Nor, 2. That Christians have not the promise of this life and for temporal mercies; but because they had many particular, peremptory and absolute promises for such things, which do not belong to us, who instead of *Canaan*, a land flowing with milk and honey, have for the most part the cross for our portion and badge here in this wilderness, as being more profitable to us, and more subservient to his glory, who often maketh *the (m) ashes of the Saints the seed of the Church*. Its true, the general promises made to that people, do no less belong to us then they did to them; for instance, that word, *Ps. 84. 11.* is no less true to day, then when it was at first written; the Lord being no less then he was then, a *Sun* to comfort, and a *Shield* to protect his people. As the Lords hand is not shortned, so neither is his bowels more straitned and narrow towards us Christians; yea, as to these temporal mercies. And if they were as fit and convenient for us, we should have them as certainly, and in as great abundance. But the thing indefinitely promised, not being *hic & nunc*, and as clothed with such and such circumstances fit and convenient for us, *qua talis*, and as such it is not contained in the promise. And thus, though *the Lord will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly*, yet he will not give such a supposed mercy, but really a snare. And thus in withholding of it, he withholdeth not what is good, but what would be evil. We will not now enter the lists with (n) *Thomas* and *Cajetan*, whose words, if rightly understood, may admit an orthodox sense, albeit to the first view it would appear, that they denied that temporals should be askt. But (o) *Guido de Baisio*, hath here fallen into such a manifest contradiction, that I know not what can be said for his vindication; but leaving that task to those of his profession, we shall only propound one or two objections, which might (as we conceive) stumble some weak ones.

Obj^{ct}. We should be carefull for nothing, for none of these temporall perishing things, nor lay up for our selves treasures on earth, nor take thought for our life what we shall eat, what we shall drink, or for our body what we shall put on; it is pagan like to take thought for to morrow, or to seek after these things. *Philip*. 4. 6. *Mat*. 6. 19, 25, 28, 31, 32, 34. we must not labour for that meat that perisheth, but only for the meat that endureth unto eternall life. *Job*. 6. 27. and were it not to mock and tempt the great God, and to prostitute one of his ordinances, taking his name in vain, if we should pray for such things for which we may not take thought, care, or labour. **Ans.** These and the like Scriptures do not, cannot condemn all sort of care and labour for these things; not a moderat, orderly and subordinat care and labour for, and provision of them, for that is frequently enjoyned as a duty, and hath accordingly been accompanied with successe and a blessing; as we ought to be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, so we must not be slothfull in businesse that concerneth the outward man, *Rom*. 12. 11, we should follow our calling, and may work with our hands, that we may have lack of nothing. *1 Thess*. 4. 11, 12. yea and if any man do not care and provide for his family, he is (so far, and in respect of his negligence which the very light of nature doth condemn.) worse then an infidel. *1 Tim*. 5. 8.

And thus we may well retort the argument, what we may (p) desire, care and labour for, that we may pray for; we may not put our hands to that work, on which we should not ask a blessing, and praise him when he followeth our labours with successe: all care then is not forbidden, but a carnall, immoderat, distrustfull, excessive, perplexing, and soul-destroying care, anxiety, and labour; when thus we seek these outward things, and make them our idol, when we prefer them to the Kingdom of God, and dote upon them as necessary things, which we cannot and will not upon any tearmes want, this is a pagan-lik sin to be abominated by all who beleeve that there is a life to come; and it is the bane of our profession, that so many ticular Christi-

Obj^{ct}. 1.

(p) August. ad
prob. de or.
deum, hoc licet
orare quod li-
cet desiderare.
epist. 121.

Obj. 1.

(q) *Evertere
non est otios op-
erantibus ipsis
Dii faciles, no-
citura tega, no-
citura peruntur
Militia—ergo
quid optandum
foret ignorasse
fueris.* Juven
Sat 10. *divitia
multis exiit
fueris honores
complures pes-
sumaderunt,
regnum exi-
tus sape mise-
rabiles cernun-
tur, splendida
conjugia non-
nunquam domus
funditus ever-
terunt* &c.
Thom loc. cit.
art. 5. ex.
M. Valerio.

(r) *Apud Platon.
loc. infra
citando ibough
Plato there
bringeth in So-
crates speaking
yet its known to
them who are
acquaint with
his way of writ-
ing that he mak-
eth Socrates ex-
presse what he
himself would*

say and did approve: some do cite this opinion from Thomas, and Thomas from M. Valer. and all ascribe it only to Socrates; but he who will goe to the first fountain will see that Plato was also of that judgment; yet there may be some question concerning Socrates what was indeed his opinion, he being only by way of supposition, and because of that kind of writing by way of dialogue mentioned; the work and words, and often the master and opinion being only Plato's.

ans do rather serve Mammon then the true God, and prefer the trifles of a perishing world to the uncorruptible and undefiled inheritance.

Object, 2. That which we most desire and covet, may prove most hurtfull and noxious to us; (q) riches, honors and pleasures have often occasioned not only the eternall ruine of the soul, but also the shame, misery and bodily ruine of who have enjoyed them in greatest abundance; Were it not then best and safest not to pitch upon any of these things, but to hold in the generall, casting our selves over upon the Lords holy and wise providence, that he may make choyce of that which is good and expedient for us to have and enjoy?

Ans. I have often with admiration called to mind the opinion of (r) *Socrates* and *Plato* concerning this particular, their modesty and self-denyall, and resigning themselves wholly over to divine disposal, they would not prescribe to the Lord as not knowing what in particular to ask, and therefore would only in the generall pray, *that God would give what is good.* O! how should such a consideration as this humble us, who are often so particular and peremptory in our carnall desires, that *Rachel*-lik we must have them satisfied or else we must die through impatience and discontentment? Many Pagans shall rise up in judgement against this generation and condemn it because of its worldly mindednesse. O! If we did trust more to the Lord, and were lesse peremptory in our desires after these things, our earthly portion would be greater, better and more secure; and our way to the heavenly inheritance more easy, sweet and safe; yet we do not condemn the examples of holy men set down in the word, nor the constant practice of the Saints, who in their Prayers have named such particulars as they conceived to be needfull and convenient for them: what others have done in this kind we may and ought to do, we

have

have particular promises concerning such and such temporall mercies, and expresse commands to ask such and such mercies, and therefore we may ask and name the mercy we stand in need of; only let us ask with submission, and in dependence on the wisdom, love and care of our Father, and in subordination to the one thing necessary; and though we know not, yet our Father knoweth what is good and expedient for us; and he hath promised to give his Spirit to be our guide and to help us to pray as we ought both as to the mater and maner. And albeit we may follow the light of the promise, and ask what is there held forth, and name what is there expressed, yet we should pray that not what we will, but what he hath appointed to be good for us may be given unto us, and that the Spirit would moderate our desires, and rectifie them when they are misplaced.

3. *Object.* may be this, we must pray in faith, nothing wavering; but we cannot with such confidence expect and ask any of these temporall things; and therefore they are not a fit object of Prayer. *Ans.* we shall in the Lords strength, Part. 2. Chap. 2. shew what is that faith which is required in an acceptable prayer; and therefore we will remit this Objection there to be discussed and answered.

Here we might enquire of Socinians, Jesuits and Arminians, what is the sense and meaning of their Prayers? and what they do ask from the Lord while they pray for these temporall and outward things? Either it must be nothing, or too much, some one or other miraculous dispensation, that either he would suspend his concurrence from these second causes which propend to what may hurt us, or that he would imploy and determine and provide means for procuring to us such and such mercies: neither of which can be done without a (/) miracle; for these men have limited the holy one, and bound the almightie as with Adamantine chains, and fetters of iron, unto the will and determination of the poor creature, fancying an obligation to ly upon him by vertue of that law whereby he as the first (rather last) and generall cause must concurre with all and every one of the creatures, according to their exigence, and

Obj. 3.

(a) It were an egregious templing of the Lord to ask a miracle without a revelation on and some speciall warrant, which none can now expect, and yet without a miracle according to the Jesuiticall hypothesis the Lord can neither give nor withhold any thing from us; and wherefore then should we pray unto him?

at their nod, call and determination. And thus the Lord (unless he will work a miracle and alter the course of nature, and contravene that law and order he hath appointed in governing the world, or rather his suffering the creatures to sit in the throne of providence, and to govern the world according to their pleasure and inclination) must become like the Pagan idols, *who can neither do good nor evil*, Isa. 41. 23. Jer. 10. 5. and the world must be governed by fortune and a blind providence: And the Lord must not be said to guide, rule, lead and determine his creatures, but they to rule, lead and determine him, yea, often (as in evil actions) against his will, and with abhorrence and reluctancy; nay, (1) adversaries themselves are not ashamed to avouch and profess, that he who doth all things according to the counsel of his own will, *Eph. i. 11.* is often *forced* (by virtue of that office, which as the universal cause he is obliged to discharge) to concur with his creatures according as they shall determine him, that he is often *drawn* and compelled by them. So that omnipotency is no less subjected to our will, then those habits and members which we use as we will; so that the Lord now is not a free agent, but a natural and necessary; and though he doth know, yet he must wink as if he did not see, and follow the creature wheresoever it doth draw him. Thus in the general, those learned Rabbies dogmatize, and particularly as to the present case (u) *Sotus* and *Vega* confess, that while we pray for temporal mercies, we only ask that the world may be governed by blind fortune, and that God would neither do good nor evil. For though their words be more smooth, while they say that they ark, that

(1) *Deus quasi coactus munere causae universalis permississimum concursum qui torquetur contra intentum ad malum. Ruiz. de vol. Dei, disp. 38. sect. 2. et disp. 26. sect. 5. Deus pertrahitur et veluti abripitur a causa secundae Raynand. mor. discip. dist. 4. q. 3. art. 5. sect. 355.*

Deus non solum non concurrat cum inclinatione sed etiam cum repugnantia. — adverte omnipotentiam ex natura rei esse indifferentem ut subiciatur quasi potestati voluntatis creatae sicut habitus voluntati hominis, unde fit ut Deus supposita voluntate (scu ut loquitur Raynand. loc. cit. sect. 360. passim cum causis secundis inchoat vel potius lege sua de cooperando) non sit agens liberum sed deinde ac si esset necessarium et nobiscum a fine cognitione concurrere, Arriag. curs. phil. disp. 10. phys. sect. 2. subf. 3. ingenua est hac Jesuita confessio cui alii subscribere tenentur, immerito itaque et inconsequenter a Raynando vapulans Canus, Sot. Valsq. Sal. et alii quod statuant Deum non esse causam liberam sed naturalem et necessarium dum cooperatur ad actus nostros, vid. Ray. loc. cit. sect. 359. perigrapho tamen sequenti facietur hunc dicendi modum posse trahi ad bonum sensum (u) Sot. lib. de nat. et grat. cap. 31. ad secundum arg. Greg. Veg. opus. de iustif. q. 12.

God would give us these things, *generali* (no *comuni*) & *providentia*, out of a general providence; yet, these words being duly pondered, do hold out no other thing then what we collected from them: for, their general providence is nothing else but an abdication of God's care and provision of his government and bounty. As for others, they either (of purpose, as it would appear) pass over this difficulty, and only speak of the necessity of prayer, as to spiritual matters; others hunt after some evasions, which neither they nor the reader can lay hold on. But, (x) *Pelagius*, their old Master, dealt more ingenuously, when he confessed, that prayer was scarce necessary, yea, or profitable: For, it was well said by (y) *Augustine*, that there is nothing more foolish, then to ask from another that which is in our own power. We might extend this question to spiritual things, and shew, that these also, according to the principles of those men, do wholly depend upon our selves, our own wills, and the right improvement of our natural abilities. And thus the ancient (z) Doctors, from this Topick, have drawn a strong argument against *Pelagius* and all his followers; that either we must leave off to pray, or else (a) disclaim the *Pelagian* Doctrine. I know they speak of some moral swasion, some impression upon the understanding and outward offer of the Gospel; but, as for any work upon the will and heart, that they will not acknowledge: and as to the former, they put it in our hands also, in that they teach that we may merit, deserve, and thus procure, and (as it were) purchase it with our own money. But we will not now launch any further into this Ocean.

Concl. 2. Albeit we may pray for temporals, and particularly name what we stand in need of; yet, we must not offer up to God any desire that can have no spiritual or rational motive; we may not offer up in prayer, our sinfull desires, yea, nor any sensual, rash and indeliberate desire, though upon the matter lawfull. As it becometh not the prudence and self-denial that is required in Christians to care for, and be taken up with trifles, so far less the gravity, reverence, zeal be professed to me) while he was praying, what need ye ask of me that which is in your own power.

and

Obj. 2.

(q) *Evertete
Annoſtoras op-
tantiſſibus ipſis
Dii faciles, no-
citura teſta, no-
citura petuntur
Militia— ergo
quid optantium
foret ignorare
ſuſeris. Juven
Sat. 10. divitiis
multis exitio
ſuere, honores
complures peſ-
ſunaderunt,
regnum exitus
ſape miſe-
rabiles cernun-
tur, ſplendida
conjugia non-
nunquam domus
funditus ever-
terunt &c.*

Thom loc. cit.
art. 5. ex.

M. Valerio.

(r) *Apud Platonem, loc. infra
citando ibi
Plato ibi*

*bringeth in So-
crates ſpeaking
yet is known to
them who are
acquaint with
his way of writ-
ing that he mak-
eth Socrates ex-
preſſe what he
himſelf would*

*ſay and did approve: ſome do cite this opinion from Thomas, and Thomas from M. Valer, and all aſcribe it only to Socrates; but he who will goe to the ſiſt ſoun-
tain will ſee that Plato was alſo of that judgment; yet there may be ſome queſtion concerning
Socrates what was indeed his opinion, he being only by way of ſuppoſition, and becauſe
of that kind of writing by way of dialogue mentioned; the work and words, and becauſe the
matter and opinion being only Plato's.*

ans do rather ſerve Mammon then the true God, and prefer the trifles of a perishing world to the uncorruptible and undefiled inheritance.

Object, 2. That which we moſt deſire and covet, may prove moſt hurtfull and noxious to us; (q) riches, honours and pleaſures have often occaſioned not only the eternall ruine of the ſoul, but alſo the ſhame, miſery and bodily ruine of who have enjoyed them in greateſt abundance; Were it not then beſt and ſaſeſt not to pitch upon any of theſe things, but to hold in the generall, caſting our ſelves over upon the Lords holy and wiſe providence, that he may make choyce of that which is good and expedient for us to have and enjoy?

Anſ. I have often with admiration called to mind the opinion of (r) *Socrates* and *Plato* concerning this particular, their modeſty and ſelf-denyall, and reſigning themſelves wholly over to divine diſpoſal, they would not preſcribe to the Lord as not knowing what in particular to aſk, and therefore would only in the generall pray, *that God would give what is good.* O! how ſhould ſuch a conſideration as this humble us, who are often ſo particular and peremptory in our carnall deſires, that *Rachel*-lik we muſt have them ſatiſfied or elſe we muſt die through impatience and diſcontentment? Many Pagans ſhall riſe up in judgement againſt this generation and condemn it becauſe of its worldly mindedneſſe. O! If we did truſt more to the Lord, and were leſſe peremptory in our deſires after theſe things, our earthly portion would be greater, better and more ſecure; and our way to the heavenly inheritance more eaſy, ſweet and ſafe; yet we do not condemn the examples of holy men ſet down in the word, nor the conſtant practice of the Saints, who in their Prayers have named ſuch particulars as they conceived to be needfull and convenient for them: what others have done in this kind we may and ought to do, we

have particular promises concerning such and such temporall mercies, and expresse commands to ask such and such mercies, and therefore we may ask and name the mercy we stand in need of; only let us ask with submission, and in dependance on the wisdom, love and care of our Father, and in subordination to the one thing necessary; and though we know not, yet our Father knoweth what is good and expedient for us; and he hath promised to give his Spirit to be our guide and to help us to pray as we ought both as to the mater and maner. And albeit we may follow the light of the promise, and ask what is there held forth, and name what is there expressed, yet we should pray that not what we will, but what he hath appointed to be good for us may be given unto us, and that the Spirit would moderate our desires, and rectifie them when they are misplaced.

Obj. 3.

3. *Object.* may be this, we must pray in faith, nothing wavering; but we cannot with such confidence expect and ask any of these temporall things; and therefore they are not a fit object of Prayer. *Ans.* we shall in the Lords strength, Part. 2. Chap. 2. shew what is that faith which is required in an acceptable prayer; and therefore we will remitt this Objection there to be discussed and answered.

(n) It were an egregious tempting of the Lord to ask a miracle without a revelation and some speciall warrant, which none can now expect, and yet without a miracle according to the Jesuiticall hypothesis the Lord can neither give nor withhold any thing from us; and wherefore then should we pray unto him?

Here we might enquire of Socinians, Jesuits and Arminians, what is the sense and meaning of their Prayers? and what they do ask from the Lord while they pray for these temporall and outward things? Either it must be nothing, or too much, some one or other miraculous dispensation, that either he would suspend his concurrence from these second causes which propend to what may hurt us, or that he would imploy and determine and provide means for procuring to us such and such mercies: neither of which can be done without a (/) miracle; for these men have limited the holy one, and bound the almightie as with Adamantine chains, and fetters of iron, unto the will and determination of the poor creature, fancying an obligation to ly upon him by vertue of that law whereby he as the first (rather last) and generall cause must concurre with all and every one of the creatures, according to their exigence, and

at their nod, call and determination. And thus the Lord (unless he will work a miracle and alter the course of nature, and contravene that law and order he hath appointed in governing the world, or rather his suffering the creatures to sit in the throne of providence, and to govern the world according to their pleasure and inclination) must become like the Pagan idols, *who can neither do good nor evil*. Isa. 41. 23. Jer. 10. 5. and the world must be governed by fortune and a blind providence: And the Lord must not be said to guide, rule, lead and determine his creatures, but they to rule, lead and determine him, yea, often (as in evil actions) against his will, and with abhorrence and reluctance; nay, (1) adversaries themselves are not ashamed to avouch and profess, that he who doth all things according to the counsel of his own will, *Eph. 1. 11.* is often *forced* (by virtue of that office, which as the universal cause he is obliged to discharge) to concur with his creatures according as they shall determine him, that he is often *drawn* and compelled by them. So that omnipotency is no less subjected to our will, then those habits and members which we use as we will; so that the Lord now is not a free agent, but a natural and necessary; and though he doth know, yet he must wink as if he did not see, and follow the creature wheresoever it doth draw him. Thus in the general, those learned Rabbies dogmatize, and particularly as to the present case (u) *Sotus* and *Vega* confess, that while we pray for temporal mercies, we only ask that the world may be governed by blind fortune, and that God would neither do good nor evil. For though their words be more smooth, while they say that they ark, that

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(x) *Pelag.* apud Suar. de grat. prol. 5. cap. 1. § 18.
(y) *Quid scilicet inusquam Deum orarent faciat quod in potestate habes*, August. de pecc. mer. & remiss. lib. 2. cap. 6.
(z) *August.* plurimis in locis de nat. & grat. lib. 1. cap. 18. *epist.* 90. (cui subscribunt Patres concilii Carthaginensis.) 91. (qua est Innocentii) & 107. Hieron. *epist.* ad Cresciph. & lib. 1. contra Pelag. &c.
(a) I know a reverend Divine, who in his younger age, being tainted with Arminianism, was, by the mercy of God, reclaimed upon this consideration suggested to him (as

For what things should we pray?

(b) *Hoc licet
orare quod li-
cet desiderare*
August. *ad
prob. epist*
111.

(c) *Accord-
ing to that
sense in which
logick proposi-
tions are called
conditionall.*

(d) *For suc-
cesse may prove
a snare to thee,
and make thee
love the gain
too well, and
to mispend thy
time, and ne-
glect thy coll-
ing; but when
it is good for
thee to pre-
vail, then that
is included in
thy generall
desire for what
is good.*

and importunity that should be observed and expressed in prayer, to petition such things from God; and therefore, as the desires poured out to God must be upon the matter lawfull, so also as to the manner, and qualification they must be deliberate and serious; and as to all such desires we joyn with (b) *Augustine* while he saith, that *What we may lawfully desire, that we may lawfully pray for.* And what the Lord hath expressed in the promise, and given us his bond for, that some one way or other we may petition, either particularly, or in the generall; as hath been shown *Scct. 1.* But yet particularly to name, and desire such trifles as we could give no reason why we did ask them, and would be at a *non plus* if the Lord would put us to it to declare upon what motive and consideration we did offer up such desires unto him, would no doubt involve us in the guilt of taking Gods name in vain, and prostituting of a solemn ordinance, and not observing the preachers caution, *Eccles. 5. 1, 2.* such a rash and empty oblation would prove a sacrifice of fools: for instance we may desire to overcome, and carry away the prize in pastimes, (it were too rash simply to condemne such desires, unlesse we also condemne such recreations as sinfull and unlawfull) and yet if we should go and present these desires to God, our conscience would smite us: for though we may desire such trifles, yet we must not be serious and earnest in such desires, nor let them have such room in our rationall appetite as to dar to offer them to God, unlesse it be in generall; and then such prayers may truly be called (c) *conditionall*, because while we expresse not the particular, but only in the generall pray for what is good, if such a particular be not good, nor held out in the promise, it cannot be included in to such qualified and conditionall petitions.

But you will say, what if much be lying at the stake, may we not be more earnest in our desires, and offer them up to God? *Ans.* But what warrant hast thou to venture so much? either pride, or covetousnesse must be the motive, and darst thou offer to God such desires as spring from such a root? it were a righteous thing with God, and might prove a (d) *mercy* to thee, if such prayers were rejected, and tho-

For what things should we pray.

thou didst meet with disappointment, these who would not have recreations become their burthen, and matter of greife, should be much indifferent as to the event; and albeit thou mayest have, and cannot chuse but have some kind of complacency in successe, and some sort of desire after it, yet that is rather sensuall then rationall, and should rather be esteemed indeliberat, then to flow from a due consideration, as being concerning a thing of so little value and moment, as cannot afford any ground for a spirituall desire; which only (as we shall shew) can be a fit materiall of our Christian Sacrifice. O! but if thou hast any rationall ground, and such a plea as thou darst own and mention before the Lord, then what is the particular mercy thou judgest to be sutable and convenient for thee, with which thine inclination doth close, thy place calling or opportunity of providence doth lead and invite thee, that thou mayest name, and whatever it be, thou mayest particularly ask it of God, (though with submission) there be so many instances of this kind in Scripture, that we need not stay upon citations.

Concl. 3. The promise (which is the rule of Prayer both as to matter and (e) manner) concerning temporalls, not being absolute, universall and peremptory, neither ought we to pray for them absolutely peremptorily and without limitation, but conditionally, relatively, and with submission to the good pleasure of him who knoweth what is good and convenient for us: for these outward things being of themselves indifferent, cannot be absolutely and universally promised, the object of the promise being some good, something good to us, and in relation to our happinesse, and the one thing necessary, so that temporalls being of their own nature indifferent, they must stand under the relation of utility and profitableness when they are held forth in the promise, and should only be petitioned by us in so far as they may prove helps and means for obtaining that great end, and be subservient to us in the service of God and the work of our Salvation for we have no (f) continuing city, but wee seek one to come, whose builder and maker is God. Ah what have we to do here, but to mak for home? this is not

our

(e) Not in everything & as to every object yet as to the present particular and in a qualified sense but mainly the conformity must be as to the matter as afterwards shall be shown.

(f) Heb. 13
14. and 11. 10.
Mica. 2. 10.
Heb. 4. 9.

For what things should we pray?

our rest, we are but sojourners, pilgrims and strangers while in this wilderness, and what is there in this desert that can take up our hearts? to what purpose do we walk and run if every step we move bring us not neerer to the promised Land? and what will golden aples profit us, if they make us hale while we are running for the rich prize? Ah! what are carnall delights, riches and honors, but so many snares and weights which should be laid aside while we are running the race that is set before us? *Heb. 12. 1.* Since therefore we know not what is the measure and portion of temporall and outward things which is good and sutable for us, we ought not to be peremptory in our desires after such or such a measure of them, but should submissively roll our selves over upon the wisdom, fidelitie, love and care of our Father, that he may give us such a portion of these things as may be most conducible for his glory, and our eternall happinesse. And O! how carefully should we watch over our hearts, that our lusts, our pride, or covetousnesse do not enflame, and add fewel to our desires which naturally are thus set on fire; labouring to moderat them, and alwayes to keep them within bounds, that they be not excessive, and exorbitant; saying with *Agur, give me neither poverisie nor riches*, *Pro. 30. 8.* and having food and raiment, let us (according to the Apostles exhortation and Iacobs wish) be therewith content *1 Tim. 6. 8. Gen. 28. 20.* O! let us often mind our main businesse, and cheif end, that it may regulat all our desires, they being confined and kept in subordination to it.

Concl. 4. Although none of these outward things, no not our bodily life and being (which as the end must be more noble then all other things which are but means for maintaining and comforting thereof) are so necessary that they should be absolutely and peremptorily loved, desired and askt, yet we may more confidently and peremptorily pray for a competent measure of those things that are more necessary for our being and life, then for meer accessories, or for abundance and affluence of these transitory things: we may more warrantably pray for our (g) *dayly Bread* then that our (h) *corne and wine may abound*; and with (i) *Agur* we may more peremptorily

(g) *Mat. 6. 11.*

(h) *Pla. 4. 7.*

(i) *Prov. 30.*

torily ask food (*k*) convenient, and that we be not pinched with poverty, then that we may have (*l*) riches, honors and pleasures. There is a competency and sufficiency which we cannot determine, because it altereth and varieth according to our calling, place and condition; so that in respect of one and the same man, that may be a competency and sufficient portion for him while in a private capacity, which after he is a magistrate, judge, master of family, &c. is not enough nor sufficient for his condition, rank and place: albeit it were no difficult work to appoint for every one a Physicall (as I may call it) competency and measure, which may suffice for maintaining his naturall life and being; thus a very litle may suffice the most gluttonous appetite, for *natura est paucis consenta*. Yet only he whose wisdom is an unsearchable depth, can assigne to every man a politique and civil competency suitable not only to his condition and rank in the world, but also to his condition as he is a Pilgrime and viator and as he is on his journey home-wards; for we are ready either to allow too much, or too litle to others; and alwayes too much to our selves: but certainly, a competency is desirable, he who is the (*m*) God of order having appointed severall degrees and stations amongst men, doth no doubt allow to every man such a measure of these outward things as may be sufficient to maintain him in such a rank; and he may as warrantably petition such a measure of these things as is sufficient for that end, as he may ask bread to put in his own mouth: nay, this civil and morall competency is no lesse then the naturall included in that (*n*) petition for dayly bread, and in Agurs (*o*) desire of food convenient; for the persons (*p*) us and (*q*) me, must not only be considered in a naturall, but also in a morall and politick condition and relation; if we be masters of families, that will not be food convenient for us which doth not serve for the maintenance of the family, and that which may be enough for us and our families, will not be sufficient for maintaining us into that rank and degree which is requisite for one who is in a publick charge, nor for defraying the expences our place may put us to.

Yet let us not here exclude the former cautions, though

Cc

such

(*k*) Sufficientem non indigentem quibus vult, nec amplius vult, alioquin non ipsam vult, et ideo non decet vult. Aug. gust ad prob: exist 121.

cap. 6.
(*l*) Qui autem dicit in oratione, Domine multiplica divitias meas: aut honores meos auge, aut fac me in hoc seculo prepotentem; aliquis clementem erga patrem cum non invenit in oratione Domini ea quae possit hac vota cooptare. Aug. ibid cap. 12.

(*m*) 1 Cor. 14. 33.

(*n*) Mat. 6. 11.

(*o*) Prov. 30. 8.

(*p*) Mat. 6. 11.

(*q*) Pro. 30. 8.

Such a measure of these things may be comparatively and relatively necessary, that is, 1. more necessary then what is above the just measure; and 2. necessary in reference to our being in, and the discharging of our places aright, yet these most necessary things ought only be desired and petitioned, 1. secondarily, giving spirituels the precedency in our estimation and affection; 2. relatively and in subordination to the great and cheif end. And thus, 3. conditionally, if these things be, and only so far as they shall prove subservient to the one thing necessary. And, 4. submissively and with a cheerfull resignation of our selves to the good pleasure and disposall of our kind Father, who knoweth best what is good for us to have or want; and 5. moderately, too great promotion or honors, too great affluence and plenty, may prove a snare and a judgement. *Deut.* 32. 15. Thy estate may be too great, as thy shoes and garments too large; much baggage and provision will rather prove a burthen then a help to the pilgrime. O let us then take heed to the exhortation, and see that our conversation be without covetousnesse. *Heb.* 13. 5. though thou mayest provide for thy family, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. Though thou mayest lay up a fore hand as *Joseph* did against the famine, *Gen.* 41. 48. though thou mayest thus moderately care for to morrow, and parents provide for their children, 2 *Cor.* 12. 14. yet with moderation, all care for these things that wants this qualification, is sinfull, and must be abandoned. *Phil.* 4. 6, 5.

Concl. 5. While we say that temporalls ought not be absolutely askt, we do not affirme our prayers for these things should be in that sense conditionall, in which the Logicians do call an enunciation conditionall and hypothetick: because thus the truth (r) of neither part is considered, but only their connexion; and thus doth (/) affirm nothing to be existing, it doth not import that either the condition is, or shall be placed; or that the consequent, *viz.* what is inferred upon such a supposition or condition, now is, or at any time hereafter shall really be. I grant the promises concerning these outward things may thus be called conditionall; because the condition (either 1. of the expediency of these things, 2. of faith and other requisits

(r) *Vera enim est tunc conditionalis Si Petrus esset Bucephalus, esset irrationalis.*

(/) *Suppositio (ut aiunt) nihil ponit.*

requisites in our prayer; and, 3. of walking uprightly as to the person and supplicant) failing, these are not included in the promise, which is intailed to such a condition and proviso; and so we cannot in faith plead such a promise, untill first we begg and obtain a pardon. And though there were no such failing, either in the person or his performance; either in the supplicant or in his supplication, which might infer and (according to the tenor of the covenant of grace) procure a forfeiture of our right, and exclude us from the promise; though we may confidently and in faith approach the Throne, knowing assuredly that we shall have in answer to our prayers, either the particular (*viz.* if it be good and expedient) or (†) else the equivalent, some other, yea, some better thing in stead of it, yet we must ask with submission as to the particular it self, not knowing whether or not, *hic & nunc*, it be good for us, and so whether or not the promise doth give us a right to it. (r) See part. 4. sect. 1.

Thus the promises are conditional in the former sense, but our prayers are not: For though we ask upon condition, yet positively and determinately we ask: for that condition rather respects the return, grant and answer, then prayer it self; rather our getting and obtaining, then our asking and desiring: for absolutely we ask and desire, but we do not ask and desire, that we may absolutely and upon any terms have and receive, but only upon condition, if it be good and expedient for us to have. And thus the condition is rather included in the object of prayer, then in the act it self. Yet since the act doth include a necessary habitude to the object, and prayer to the return and answer; (for what is it to pray for such and such a particular, but to petition that it may be given to us and we may have it) therefore is it that prayer it self is said to be conditional; which doth not, cannot import, that we do not really and properly ask and desire, but that we do not ask and desire peremptorily; and that we may have upon any terms; and that we ask with submission to the divine appointment, and in subordination to the one thing that is absolutely necessary. But though we thus determinately, and (in a manner) absolutely ask, if we

respect the act and performance it self, yet looking to the whole complex, especially to the grant and return, in the supposed case of non-expediency, equivalently, and by just interpretation, we may be said not to ask the particular which we name in our prayers, but rather to ask that we may not have it; while we ask in subordination to the great end, we pray that we may not get, that which would obstruct and hinder our obtaining of it: And therefore since the particular we pitched on as convenient for us, is such as would prove a snare and a weight to beset us, while we are running the race that is set before us, while we pray for it relatively and in subordination, we pray that we may not have it in the supposed case of opposition, as shall at greater length be shown, Part 4. Here it may be ask't, whether we may also pray for the condition? and thus pray absolutely for temporals. For according to the rule in the Schoole, *An (u) hypothetick proposition when the condition is placed, becometh absolute.* And thus if the condition be a part of the object, and directly & in reſſe, belong to the mater of the petition, it is placed there, and the petition cannot be said to depend upon it as a condition, and so cannot in respect of it be called conditional. But not to contend for terms, the question is whether we may pray for the condition, that it may be placed; as for the thing, that it may be given? viz. 1. That the Lord would give such a particular; and, 2. make it a blessing. *Ans.* There is no doubt that we may ask a blessing with all we enjoy, but whether we may ask, that such a thing (of it self indifferent) may become a blessing that we may enjoy it, seemeth more difficult. For to us, such a petition seemeth to import too much eagerness and peremptoriness in our desire after such a thing; and therefore whatever may be said of this way of asking in it self, as not being simply unlawfull; yet it appeareth to be most safe, either to ask conditionally, or if the condition be also askt, and the placing of it be a part of the petition, our submission would then be expreſſed, and we would cordially protest, that though we ask such a thing, and that it may prove a blessing, yet we will not grudge nor repine though it be withheld, but will acquiesce in the good

(u) *Hypothetick*
exposita con
ditione evadit
absoluta.

p leasura

pleasure of God, and will construe a denial to proceed from the love and care of a Father, who knows best what is fittest for us to have or want; and who can abundantly compensate and make up that supposed loss. But since the condition of expediency and subserviency to the great end, must belong to the object of our prayers either as a part, or limitation of it; we may enquire, whether alwayes we may reflect upon that condition? and only ask these temporals in relation and subordination to the one thing necessary. *Ans.* We will not now digresse to speak to that noble question, how we should in all our wayes intend and aim at the glory of God? But in answer to the present question, it will not be denied that they, who must do (x) all to the glory of God, must propose this end in that most spiritual and immediate part of worship,

(x) 1 Cor.

10. 31.

wherein we have (y) fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ; that they, who must eat and drink to the glory of God, must ask their dayly bread to the glory of God.

(y) 1 Joh. 1. 3.

Its true, the Saints do not in every petition actually and formally reflect upon that great end; yet virtually and by just interpretation they do; so that if they were askt, if they desired such a mercy, though it should prove prejudicial unto, and obstructive of the glory of God, and a hinderance of their salvation; they might truly reply, that they would not in any wise have it upon these terms, and that they would prefer affliction to such a supposed mercy: and this *virtual and habitual intension*, must exclude all peremptory and impatient desires after these things; we must not so forget the chief end, as to make these base things our end; which we must do, when we desire them so absolutely and peremptorily, as that we will not bear a denial: When these things are sought in subordination, they must also be sought with submission, as not knowing but they may be hinderances and impediments of that which should be most desired. I do not deny, that those things have a more immediate and direct tendency to another end, as being supports and comforts of our bodily and perishing life; and that they may lawfully be desired for that end; but life it self, and so all the means tending to that end, must be referred to an higher

(2) *Yea, Suarez goeth a greater length then others, affirming, that outward and indifferent things, such as riches are, per se expetibilia & propter se amabilia.*

And yet Suarez will not deny, that the externals are but bona utilia, and so cannot, as such, be desired for themselves, but only because of their use.

higher end, unless we prove selfish and sensual Epicureans. And thus I would rather interpret then exaggerat that common saying of Philosophers and (*) Schoolmen, *that knowledge, health, &c. are desirable for themselves.* I grant that they have some intrinsical goodness in them, and conveniency with us, and agreeableness to our natural, yea and rational inclination, and upon that account may be loved and desired, and so may become *finis proximi* and *intermediis*, the mediāt and nearest end of our desires and endeavours: but, he who will rest on these temporal things (the most noble and excellent of them, yea, though they were all united and combined together and laid in one heap) as his ultimāt, chief and last end, deserves not the name of a Christian.

Concl. 6. Not only must we ask temporal things, that we may have and enjoy them; but also, after we have received and do possess them, that we may have the right and sanctified use of them: many care not how they have, if they have; not knowing (or not regarding) that they may want a right to what they possess; and so many have reason to ask what they have already, to ask a right and interest in it through the Covenant of Grace, that it may be added as a pendicle of the Kingdom of God; according to that word of promise, *Mat. 6. 32.* and that it may come through the channel of a promise; and as the purchase of his blood, in whom all the promises (concerning temporals as well as spirituals) are *yea* and *amen*, and have their accomplishment, *2 Cor. 1. 20.* We will not here enquire, if these temporal and outward things should be askt in the name of Christ; but will suppose that it must be so from the following Chapter. Nor, will we now digress to ask what right unbelievers have to the creatures, albeit a sentence of condemnation be past against them, *1 Joh. 3. 18.* Yet, as the condemned rebel, by the Kings concession, grant and donation, hath some food and refreshment allowed to him till the day of execution come, so they, out of the general bounty and forbearance of God, being, for a time, spared, have out of that bounty the possession of the creatures continued with them; and they do hold them by a certain grant and donation from the great King; so that none

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of their fellow-creatures may question their right and put them from their possessions : though they, by their rebellion against God, have forfeited their right to his creatures ; yet, thou mayest not, without a licence from the King, (which no Anabaptist can produce) seize upon the forfeiture. And thus the wicked have not only a *providential* right (as some, but most improperly do call it ; for, though providence may give the possession, yet, it cannot give a right ; otherwise theevs and robbers might justify their course, and plead their title to what they enjoy) but also, 2. a *civil* right, ratified by the Law of Nature and Nations, and the municipal Statutes of the place where they live : they have a right, 3. of *inheritance*, descending unto them from their ancestors ; or, a right, 4. of *purchase*, by their labours and industry, by bargain, covenant and transaction, &c. And thus their civil right will stand as firm and valid in humane Courts, as if they were Saints and the holiest men on earth ; but alas ! they want a filial and federal right, they being (a) *strangers* (a) Eph. 2. 12. *from the covenants of Promise*, and (notwithstanding of their Profession) *without God in the world* ; and (though they be titular Christians) *without Christ*, who is Heir of all things, Heb. 1. 2. and through whom only they can have a spiritual right and sanctified use of the creatures ; they will only thus become ours, if we be in Christ, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. and wo to him, though his possessions were never so great, who doth not hold of Christ ; who dar meddle with what is his without his leave, he is the great Heir, *he is Heir of all*, and yet how few do acknowledge his right : but, what is spoken of riches, Prov. 23. 5. may well be said of all that is enjoyed without Christ ; *they are and they are not*, as if they were not ; they will do no more good then if they were not enjoyed, nay, but much hurt, they are cursed : all will prove a snare, his meat in his bowels shall be turned into the gall and poison of asps, Job. 20. 14, 16.

Thus then, beside the having and possessing of the creature, we must ask, 1. a spiritual and federal right unto, and interest in them ; a right in him who is Heir of all, and as being the purchase of his blood. 2. For a blessing to them, that they

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they may prove helpfull unto us, that our cloaths may give heat, and our meat may feed us. 3. For the sanctified use of them, that they may prove a blessing and not a snare; that they prove not weights and hindrances; but rather a staff in our hand, that they become not fuel to feed our lusts and weapons of unrighteousness; but rather motives to obedience, and talents wherewith we will trade for the honour of our Lord, and the salvation of our souls.

It is true, prayerless ones may have and possess the creatures; but only by prayer thou canst have a spiritual right, and the sanctified use of them, *1 Tim. 4. 5.* O then! whatever course thou take, do not slight and neglect prayer; we spake of thy warrant, *Conl. 1.* and now for pressing this exhortation, we shall add these few particulars. 1. What needest thou scruple to pray for these outward things, though they be not thy portion, and be as nothing in respect of the pearl of price and the one thing necessary? yet, they are in their own kind and maner (b) good and desirable, *2 Tim. 4. 4.* they are usefull, they are suteable and convenient for thee, *Prov. 30. 8.* Yea, 2. they are in some way necessary, and we stand in need of them, *Mat. 6. 32.* Nature requires them, our vocation, place and condition calleth for them: Nay, 3. duty towards God and man doth call to thee to pray for them; for, without them thou canst not obey the (c) commandment of paying tribute, of owing nothing to any man, thou canst not be hospitable and distribute to the necessity of the Saints, &c. 4. And as the want of them doth thus hinder the performance of several duties, so it is a great temptation to many sins. O! saith *Agur*, *Let me not have poverty lest I steal, and take the name of my God in vain.* 5. Go to the Lyons and Ravens and they will teach thee thy duty; they cry to God in their own way; the eyes of all things wait upon him, that he may give them their meat in due season, *Pf. 104. 21, 27. Pf. 145. 15. Pf. 147. 9.* They cry with the voice of nature, and will not thou lift up thy soul and thy heart to God; indigence maketh them groan, and will it not send thee to the Throne, and make thee cry to thy Father that he may pity thee? 6. What

(b) Ne putentur mala, dantur & bonis: ne putentur magna vel summa bona, dantur & malis. Itemque auferuntur ista & bonis ut probentur & malis ut crucientur. Augult epist. 70. Bonif. com.

(c) Rom. 13. 13. Rom. 13. 7, 8, &c.

we get by prayer, hath a heavenly excellency in it; though
 is worse but a morsel of bread, it hath more dignity in it then
 all the gems and diamonds, and all the imperial Crowns of
 the world, which come by the hand of a common providence;
 all these things are but the bones without the marrow, *the*
whole Turkish Empire (saith (d) Luther) *as great as it is,* (d) Luth. in
is but a crum which the Master of the family casts to the Gen.
dogs: but, be it little or much that is given in return to
 prayer, it is a blessing indeed, and part of the childrens bread:
 and it's excellency appeareth in these particulars. 1. In that
 it is a stream flowing from the purest fountain; to wit, the
 love and good will of our Father: it is a fruit of love, and
 a seal and pledge of love, and as it cometh from love, so it
 tendeth to love; it is a coal to enflame our affections and to
 warm our heart; it is a motive and layeth an engagement on
 us to love our kind Father, who visiteth us every morning
 with his tender mercies; but prayerless souls take no no-
 tice of Gods hand, nor do they much value his love. Hence,
 3. it is a mercy indeed, a promised and covenanted mercy;
 as it cometh without that vexation, heart-curtling and dis-
 strullfull care, and excessive toyl and labour; so it is enjoyed
 without fear, and is free of the snares and temptations that
 otherwise use to accompany it; *the blessing of the Lord mak-*
eth rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it. Prov. 10. 22. It
 is by prayer that the creatures become good to us, and are
 sanctified as to their enjoyment and use. 1 Tim. 4. 45.
 4. The right and title of possession doth add very much to
 the worth and goodness of things, though not in themselves,
 yet as to us who possess them: for, 1. Who doth value
 what a thief, robber, usurper or oppressor doth possess?
 2. How quickly may he be called to an account and as in a mo-
 ment, with disgrace, be stripped naked of all? yea, though there
 were not such hazard of losing them yet, an ingenuous spirit,
 yea, a moral Pagan, would rather chuse a little, to which he
 hath a right, then thus to enjoy great revenues. *Arav. 16. 8.*
 5. We use to judge and esteem of the worth of things by
 their price, especially if laid out by a wise man and good man
 chaut; but every morsel of bread, the meanest creature thou

gettest in return to thy prayers, is the purchase of blood, it cost more then a world; though thou wert the greatest Monarch on earth, by all thy Crowns thou couldst not purchase a right and sanctified title to the meanest of the creatures; silver and gold may give possession and a civil right, but they cannot give a spiritual right unto, and a sanctified use of the least crum of bread; and therefore we must ask in his name, who hath paid the price and in whose blood our mercies must be *waschen*, that they may become *pure* and sanctified, and may prove blessings indeed.

O then! since thou canst not enjoy these things in mercy and in love, unlesse they be given in return to thy prayer, let this be thy way, which is not the way of the men of this world; though it be an easie and safe way, and though only the right and approven way; but you will say, who doth condemn this way? *Ans.* Though few dare with their mouth belch out such atheisme, yet in their heart, and by their life and practice, too many say, O let us rather chuse any other way, let us imploy our wit, care and industry, and if that will not do the turn, let us add falsehood and deceit, and whatsoever course else, though never so unlawfull and unjust, yet if it be called our own, and if we by it be thought to help our selves, we will rather follow that way then rest on Gods care and providence; 1. because (think they) if we may enjoy them without God, we may be masters of them, and dispose of them as we will; we may cut and carve for our selves; and like him, *Hab.* 2. 5. enlarge our desires as hell; 2. Because we dow not away with such preciseness, tenderness and circumspection in our whole conversation, and such zeal and fervency in prayer as is required, and therefore we rather work and toyl a week, then pray half an hour; we rather sweat at our calling, then take such heed to our steps: We know not, we are not acquaint with, we love not, and cannot endure that way, but we know our business, and like our work, and when its done its done, and we are at rest; but if we get any thing by prayer, our work is but as it were to begin, we must yet watch over our hearts and waxes, and take heed how we use and employ what we

have

have gotten ; we must return the sacrifice of praise to God for his bounty in giving, &c. And therefore the Apostle had reason to exhort us, *That in every thing, by prayer, supplication and thanks giving, we should make our requests known unto God*, Phil. 4. 6. Not as if the Apostle, and we now, while we are pressing this necessary, though much slighted duty would have you enlarge your desires after these things, or be too solicitous about them, and peremptory in your requests and prayers for them. No, no, if our zeal be spent that way (as alas too often it is) that will marre the acceptance of our prayers, and bring down a curse rather than a blessing ; but the end and scope of his exhortation is, that we would live in a constant dependance upon God, committing to him our selves and all our affairs ; begging his blessing on all our wayes and endeavours ; and that whatever we get and enjoy, be it little be it much, it may prove a blessing, and may be given in mercy and in love ; that we may have the sanctified use of all we enjoy, and grace to improve it to the honour of his name, and for promoting the work of our salvation.

O then ! art thou called a Christian ? and if thou be not an atheist and worldling, whatever pains and diligence thou art at, let this be the main, from which thou expectest more, then from thy rising early and going late to bed ; whatever care and labour may want success, and prove to no purpose, yet thou shalt never seek his face in vain. He hath said, he will not send the praying soul away empty ; and will he not perform ? O then let us say, we would rather have a little this way, then all the riches and honours imaginable without the blessing ; rather let us have none of these things with the love of God, then never so much in wrath. Have we little or much, or nothing with the blessing, we are happy ; and all the work without this will prove but a curse and a snare *Super a Super*, a gift and no gift. Ah Sirs ! all of us would have, and when would we say its enough ? But O ! how few are they who take the right course, and run to the right fountain ? Whether would you trade with your own stock or not ? whether do you expect more by your prayers, or your

labour and industry? and whether would you rather receive from God, or by the work of your own hands? canst thou say, that thou dependest upon God and wilt be content with his allowance, and resolvest to improve what he giveth, to the honour of his name; if this be thy purpose and desire, then hast thou little, or hast thou much, it is a blessing; thy condition is good, and best for thee; thou hast, and thou shalt have more, until thou be satisfied, when the immortal crown shall be put upon thy head.

We will close this discourse concerning the right manner of asking temporal and outward things, with a word from the learned *Augustine*. When ye ask temporals, ask (saith (e) he) in measure and with moderation; ask in fear and with submission, committing to him to give, if what we ask would do us good; and to withhold, if he knoweth it would hurt. The Physician knoweth, but not the sick, what would abstain and what would procure health.

(c) *Qua-do temporalia petiti, cum modo petite, cum timore petite, illi committite ut si profuerit, si sit obesse, non det, quid autem proficiat quid obfit, medicus novit non aegrotus, Aug. serm. 53. de ver. dom.*

(f) *Primum h. e. praeprae. Glos. interlin. Primum non tempore sed dignitate; primum querite regnum Dei, i. e. praerogative omnibus verbis ceteris Glos. ordi. Quod primum relative dicatur ad secundum patet, &c. Nic. de Lyra in loc.*

Concl. 7. While we compare spirituall things with temporall we must observe that order prescribed by our Lord *Jesus*. *Mat. 16. 3.* Spirituall things must have the precedency, we should seek first the kingdom of God, (which consisteth in righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost, *Rom. 14. 17.*) We must seek the things that belong to that kingdom (if) first, not so much in respect of time, and externall method, as for the holy Ghost doth not peremptorily determine, and confine us to any order that way; and in that perfect pattern of prayer *Mat. 7.* the petition for dayly bread, is put in the middle but first in regard of our estimation, affection and desire; our love, our care and endeavours must mainly be spent; and employed about these more excellent things; nay in respect of these, we must hate father and mother, and life it self, when they come in competition; we must carry our selves towards these inferior things, which we are obliged to love most dearly, as if we hated them; we must forsake and abandon them, *Luk. 14. 26. Mat. 10. 37. 38.* We must count them as loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of *Christ*. *Philip. 3. 8.* there is no comparison

parison between-things temporall and eternall; things that are momentary and the exceeding, and eternall weight of Glory; things that belong to the outward, and to the inward man, 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17, 18. if the strength and zeal of our affections be not placed on God and spirituall things, we undervalue them; if our desires be not thus enlarged, if we do not thus hunger and thirst after the heavenly manna, we shall never tast of it. The generall precept, and promise Mat. 7. 7. &c. when it is applied to these excellent things, must take in a suitable qualification and proviso; things must be askt and desired according to their necessity, worth and excellency; there is but only one thing necessary, which we may not want upon any terms, Luke 10. 42. and therefore all other things should be loved and sought in subordination, and in reference unto it: we must not be absolute and peremptory in our desires after them, (for what we thus covet, and affect, we cannot want, we must have it whatever it cost) O! let us not so set our hearts upon perishing trifles: but earnestly (g) covet the best things: nay if these excellent and spirituall things have not the precedency, and first place in our estimation, affection, desires, endeavours, pains and diligence; if these be not mainly imployed for getting, and keeping of them; we will not only lose what we have thus basely undervalued, but we will lose all, our first born, and the son of our strength not being the son of the promise, will get none of the blessing. O! the folly of worldlings: their diligence and zeal for the fat of the earth, doth not only consume their strength, and (h) destroy their Soul, but also marreth their gain; while they trade for the earth, they lose both earth, and heaven; for that we should seek first spirituall things and give them the precedency, is (i) required, not only as a condition for our finding of them, but also for the obtaining of temporalls, that they as pence and casualties of the Kingdom of grace may be added, and given as a mercy and blessing. And albeit some temporall mercies be more necessary, then other, yet the least measure of grace should be preferred to the most necessary and usefull thing that concerneth the outward man, and to the greatest earthly excellency

(g) 1 Cor. 13.
31.

(h) Mat. 18.
26.

1 Tim. 6. 9.

(i) Mat. 6. 33.

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cellency, as being more excellent in it self, and having a more immediat and direct tendency and reference unto the great end; and therefore as the soul is to be preferred to the body, heaven to earth, eternal happiness to a perishing trifle, the childrens portion to the bones that fall to the dogs, and that which tendeth to the glorifying of God and the saving of our souls, to that which serveth to the satisfying of our carnall lusts and selfish desires, So must spirituall things alwayes have the preheminance, yea we should prefer not only grace it self, but also every mean that tendeth to the begetting or strengthening of it, all Gods ordinances, and every part of his worship, to all things under the Sun; and with *Job* esteem the words of Gods mouth more then our necessary food, not only more then our abundance and superfluities, but more then our necessary food, without which we cannot live and subsist, *Job. 23. 12.*

Concl. 8. Albeit all spiritual mercies must thus have the precedency, and the least measure of grace should be preferred to the greatest worldly excellency, yet while we compare spirituals with spirituals, these which are most absolutely, and universally necessary to our spiritual life and being, which may be called the vitals of Christianity (and such are all graces, as to their nature and existence, whatever may be said of moral and acquired vertues, yet certainly all spiritual and infused vertues are inseparably (k) conjoynd) are more earnestly and peremptorily to be desired and prayed for; and the degree and gradual perfection of grace being variable, and not the same in every one, but differently dispenced to some in greater, to others in a lesse measure, according to the good pleasure and appointment of God, we may not be so absolute and peremptory in carving to our selves, and appointing our own stature; as knowing that all the trees in Gods Orchard, are not tall Cedars, and that in Gods family there are babes as well as strong men, and that these tender plants and babes, shall ere it be long come unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, *Eph. 4. 13.* And if we will ponder the promises, which are the rule and ground of prayer, we will find, that as there is a difference both amongst temporals and

Spirituals,

(k) 1 *Job. 3.*
9. *Eph. 4. 24.*
2 *Cor. 5. 17*
&c. *grace is*
(as it were)
the soul of the
new man, &c
instanti in-
funditur, it
comes at once
and animates
the whole.

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spirituals, some temporals being more necessary then others, and some spirituals more necessary then others; so the promises accordingly do hold out after a different manner both spirituals and temporals; and that they do more absolutely and peremptorily engage for, and secure us of these things that are most necessary for us; and so we may, and should more confidently and (1) absolutely pray for such things as are most necessary and usefull. For the promises having for their end and object, our good, and what may contribute for our everlasting happiness, the more necessary any thing is for obtaining that great end, and for maintaining this bodily life, during the time our master hath appointed us to work in his vineyard, it must be the more infallibly and peremptorily held forth in the promise: *The (m) end being the measure, and prescribing the order that is amongst the means.*

Thus far in the general we may safely go, but when we descend unto particulars, we will find more difficulty; and to make way for the following Assertions, we will first enquire in what sense the promises for spiritual things, that are indispensibly necessary to salvation may be called absolute? *Ans.* Certainly not as if they concerned, and did belong to all and every one without exception; but because they are irrelative, not supposing any condition and qualification in the subject for obtaining what they hold forth: Though then they be thus absolute, yet they are not universal, though nothing in us doth make the difference, or can be alledged as a limitation, yet the Lord out of his good pleasure hath made a difference between sinners, and having elected some unto eternal life, to them he maketh an effectual offer of salvation, and preventeth them with his free promises: His election then is the only ground of discrimination. Hence we may argue thus, if these promises that are called absolute did belong to all, then all would be converted and saved, since they do not suppose any condition on our part to their performance, there can be no reason given why they should be accomplished in some and not in others, if they did belong to all: Its true, we know not till the event shew, to whom they belong and to whom not, and therefore we must not exclude

(1) In what sense we may be said to pray absolutely for spiritual things. See Concl. 10. and in what cases properly, Concl. 11.

(m) *Finis dat mensuram & ordinem: di- is in omnibus appetibilibus & agibilibus* (inquit Thom) *mensura est finis. — & ideo quae sunt ad finem habent modum ex eo quod sunt finis proportionata.* Thom. 2. 2. quaest. 17. art. 6. in corp.

For what things should we pray

exclude our selves; especially since they are large enough, and will be found to exclude none to whom the offer of the Gospel is made, who do not reject that offer and wilfully exclude themselves; the Lords discriminating love of election and fore-knowledge, doth not hinder the sinner from laying hold on eternal life, but the sinner with his own hands doth plait the snare wherein he is (n) caught and held fast; there is none in hell to day, that can challenge the general invitation and offer made in the Gospel, to all, to come, and who-soever will, to take of the water of life freely, *Rev. 22. 17. Isa. 55. 1, 2. &c.* Neither shall they be able to fetch an excuse from the promise, because it was intended to some only; it being indefinitely proposed, and no restraint laid on thee, that thou mightest not lay hold on it; thus the Lord, not expressing any man by name, condition or qualification, and yet excluding none, promiseth, *To write his laws in our hearts and in the inward parts; to put a new spirit within us, to take away the stony heart, and give a heart of flesh, to heal our backslidings, and be mercifull to our unrighteousness, to love us freely, and become our God, and that we shall be his people; and that he will cause us walk in his statutes, and put his fear in our hearts, that we shall never depart from him, &c. Jer. 31. 33. Ezek. 11. 19, 20. Ezek. 36. 26, 27, Heb. 8. 10, 11, 12. Jer. 32. 40. Hos. 14. 4. &c.* These and the like are called *promises of grace*, not supposing any condition on our part previous to their accomplishment; and thus are distinguished from the *promises made to grace*, which are conditional, and suppose a precedent gracious qualification and fitness in the subject for receiving what they hold forth: Thus a renewed pardon of sin, is promised upon repentance; (o) increase of grace to him who improveth the grace he hath received, comfort to mourners, &c. And as they, and only they who have these gracious qualifications wrought in them, can plead these promises, so no man, I will not say, unless he knew and were certain of his election, and that his name were written in the book of the Lamb (that authentick register of our charter to happiness where there is no blank bond) yet certainly none, till he be in the state of grace,

(n) Pf 7. 15.
and 9. 15. 16.
Prov. 5. 22.

(o) Vid. apud
Gul. Twiss in
Corv. defens.
Arm pag 106.
explicationem
disti. Mat. 13.
12, habenti
dabitur.

grace, can in faith plead, and lay claim to the absolute promises: But it is impossible that any man, while under an absolute promise and before it be accomplished, can know what were the eternal purposes of God concerning his state; and it were ridiculous to say, that before the performance of the absolute promises, he were in the state of grace; therefore none can in faith plead these promises. Yet he must ask, as shall be shown: may not God know what will become of us, unless we in despair break our own neck?

We will not now enter on that debate, concerning the necessity of legal preparations, and their connexion with grace; and enquire if these who are under the spirit of bondage, convincing and humbling them for their sins, may lay claim to these absolute promises. For though Scripture and experience (I might also add reason) hold out the usefulness and expediency (if not necessity) of such a law-work, if we speak of the ordinary method the Lord observeth in working grace in them who are come to years of discretion: Yet our Divines do maintain against Jesuits and Arminians, that there is not such an *infallibilis nexus*, and necessary connexion between those previous dispositions and the grace of conversion, as that the work, notwithstanding of these preparations, may not miscarry, as it did in the hands of *Felix, Agrippa, Herod* and others: and so efficacious and powerfull is the work of the spirit, that it can overcome all opposition; so that grace can (if we speak absolutely and as to the possibility of the thing) make way for it self, without such preparations; albeit it cannot be denied that usually it begins in these; and that common grace (as I may call it, for that assistance of the spirit being free, may be called grace) maketh way to saving, but since the spirit of bondage, and that legal work is carryed on by the help of the spirit; it may be enquired whether there be any promise made to such a work, not as flowing from us and as it is our work; but as it floweth from the spirit, carrying on the soul some steps, though not in, yet towards the way? One thing is certain, this is the right way and method, and if we follow on and do not draw back, we shall meet with mercy. There is none in hell who

dare say that they took this course and constantly followed it, and yet were no better; but, their conscience can tell them that they did soon weary and fell off, that they were negligent, and that they thus perished not in the use of the means, but through their negligence: though the Lord hath not bound himself by any promise, yet, he will be so far out of the reach of any such challenge, that none shall be able to say, we perished because we must perish; though we had the Gospel preached to us, yet it could do us no good.

But, (that we may not digress) it is certain, and none can deny it, that if thou hold on in that way, thou *mayest* meet with mercy, and if, with the dog, thou return to thy vomit, thou *must* perish; and though thou hast no more but a *peradventure*, a *who knows*, and a *may be*, the Lord will be gracious; that is some comfort and encouragement, and warrant and ground enough for thee to venture and follow that course: others have had no more, *Zeph. 2. 2. Joel, 2. 14. Dan. 4. 27. Amos, 5. 15.* and their labour hath not been in vain, *Jonah, 3. 9, 10.* thou wilt seek no more for thy encouragement in things that concern thy bodily life and estate; wilt thou not send for the Physician, unless thou be assured his pains will be successfull? wilt thou not sow, unless thou be assured thou shalt have a plentiful harvest? and not go to sea, unless thou know that thou wilt return safe? Ah! shall these trifles make thee venture and hazard sometimes, not only thy labour and diligence, but also much of state and riches, yea and life it self? and wilt thou be at no pains for the immortal crown. The voyage is more safe, (in the use of the means thou neither hazardest life nor estate) and the success is more certain; thou canst not produce one instance, nor point out the man who made ship-wrack, while he was trading for the pearl of price; albeit too many have turned sail and splintered upon the rocks, after they had wearied of that trade. Thus, whatever be pretended, the true cause must be thy hatred of holiness, and want of care for thy soul, and thy undervaluing the undefiled inheritance: he who loveth not his work, will not want excuses for his idleness.

Hence, our ninth *Conclusion* must be this, grace, as to it's being and existence, the habits, (or (p) rather faculties) of grace, that (q) seed of God, the radical cause, and physical principle of all spiritual actions, these absolutely necessary spiritual mercies, are not, cannot be the object of the prayer of (r) faith, unless we will say that unbelievers may pray in faith, and that faith in the subject is not a necessary condition for laying claim to the promise of successe and audience.

Concl. 9.
(p) *Quia habitus non datur posse, sed melius & facilius operari; male ergo vulgo dicuntur habitus gratiosorum deus simpliciter posse.*
(q) 1 Job. 3. 9.
(r) Jam. 5. 15.
Concl. 10.

Concl. 10. How we may be said to pray (s) absolutely; for, what we cannot pray confidently, and in faith, will be somewhat difficult to conjecture: unless it be said, that to pray absolutely, is nothing else but to pray with such fervency, zeal and enlarged desires (though that heat come only from the furnace of nature, a little warmed by the operation of the spirit, as that we will not be put off, or satisfied till we obtain a grant; refusing all capitulation, or to have any thing by way of recompence for what we thus desire: Thus being in a kind of impatience and commendable implacability: not like her, who in her passion (t) said, *give me children or else I die*; or like (u) him, who too rashly and (x) unadvisedly (though otherwise an eminent Saint) said, *Lord God what wilt thou give me since I go childless*? these longing souls may have such a vehement desire and impatience (but more deliberate and upon more weighty and pressing considerations) if their heart were opened up, we would find this (y) written there in capital letters, *What (z) wilt thou give me Lord, since I go gracelesse and Christlesse, shew mercy upon me? or else I die; what do I value other things, if I want thy love? what can trifles profit me, if I be a vessel of wrath and a cast-away?* But that we may more fully expresse the way, how the unregenerate (yet looking and panting after a change)

(t) *A modest enquiry after the sense of the common assertion of Cosuists, practicall Divines, &c. laid down as a principle to be embraced by all, rather then to be examined by any, viz. that grace should be prayed for*

absolutely, but the degree conditionally. (s) Gen. 30. 1. (u) Gen. 19. 2. (x) if he had not his eyes fixed on the Messiah, who was to be his son. (y) As Queen Mary of England a little before her death said, If she were anatomized, Gallis would be found engraven upon her heart, such was her grief for the loss of it. (z) It may be here asked, whether the man child be brought forth, or if the soul be yet in the pangs of the new birth when it doth thus groan? but it sufficeth to our purpose, what many have some a great length that way, who have perished eternally.

(a) Esth. 4.
16.

may be said to pray absolutely for grace, we will branch out what hath been hinted at, in these three particulars, 1. because the object of their prayer is absolutely, universally and invariably good, and indispensably necessary to salvation and happiness, so that no state or condition, no combination of circumstances can make it evil or indifferent; and no recompence can be made for the want of it; 2. Because the desire of the soul is (certainly should be) so boundless and enlarged, so absolute and peremptory, that no proviso, no offers by way of commutation and exchange, can satisfy and quiet the soul, or make a just compensation; 3. Albeit no unbeliever (though in the pangs of the new birth, and on the way to conversion) can pray in faith, and in full assurance of acceptance and audience, yet he may wait and still venture, and say with (a) *Esther*, I will present my requests to the King, and if I perish I perish: And who knoweth but the King will say to him (as *Abasuerus* said to her) what wilt thou, what is thy request, it shall be granted? one thing he knoweth, that otherwise he must perish, and that there is no other way to escape, and therefore he must not, he will not give over, whatever discouragements on the one hand, or alluring baits on the other, he may meet with to draw him off; knowing that though he should perish, it were better to perish at Christs feet, and with his eyes fixed on him, then any other way; especially, since he knoweth none who ever took that course and constantly followed it, who did miscarry, and met with disappointment. If it be askt, whether the unconverted may pray acceptably? we have spoken to that question. Chap. 6. Sect. 3.

Concl. 11. Albeit it be most proper and pertinent for unbelievers to pray for grace, as to its being and existence; yet Beleevers upon a mistake, and in the night of desertion, when they cannot see to read their charter to the inheritance, may pray for the very first work and impression of the spirit: Its true, if they did see, and knew what they had received, they could not complain, as if they were altogether empty, nor could they ask what they had already received, but standing to the supposition, they cannot well be blamed for asking what

what is so necessary, and they so much love and desire : yet if they were only in suspense and under some fears, it would be fitter to pray conditionally, and to say, *Lord, if thou hast not already wrought in me that blessed change, which is so desirable, and which I so much long for, O Lord work it in me, and if thou only hidest from mine eyes that seed of grace thou hast sown in my heart, Lord open my eyes that I may see thy work, and praise thee for what thou hast done.*

But here it may be asked, how doubting Beleevers may pray for grace, and whether they may be said to pray in faith ? *Ans.* 1. Certainly they may be said to pray absolutely for grace, in the sense held forth in the preceding conclusion ; will any think that their longing and thirst will be lesse vehement, and their diligence will not be so great, as the desire and endeavours of the unconverted ? but, 2. as to the particular expressed in the question, it seemeth undeniable, that Beleevers, while they are, and so long as they continue in the supposed case of doubting, denying, fearing, &c. cannot pray in faith, as that importeth an assurance of audience and acceptance : but whether or not, that be a necessary qualification of an acceptable and prevailing prayer, shall in its own (b) place be enquired ; but if by faith required in prayer be only meant a qualification of him who prayeth, rather than of prayer it self ; a qualification rather of the subject and agent, then of the act and performance it self ; such doubting souls may no doubt be said to pray in faith ; 1. because its supposed they are Beleevers, and so cannot be without faith ; yes, 2. their prayers may be (c) *mixed with faith*, faith may act lively, and joyn in the duty, though it carry not the soul the full length, and fill it not with joy in the assured expectation of a gracious return ; yes, 3. there may be a kind of recumbency, and dependance on God for a gracious return, such may adventure and cast themselves upon him for success.

(b) viz. part.
2. ch. 2.

(c) Heb. 4. 2.

Concl. 12. Yet beleevers may pray absolutely, and in full assurance of audience for grace, when not doubting of their state and the acceptance of their persons, 1. They pray that they may persevere, and that they may be kept from totall, and

Concl. 12.

(d) Cant. 1.

17.

(e) Mark. 9.

24.

(f) The Christi-
an must be like
the Crocodile,
that (as some
affirme) grows
as long as it
lives and cea-
seth to be when
it ceaseth to
grow.

(g) Joh. 15. 8.

and finall apostacy ; (for perseverance in grace is no lesse necessary then our first being in that state) 2. They may in faith pray for the consummation of grace into Glory ; that the body of sin may be destroyed, and Gods image perfectly restored unto them, that *the (d) day would break and the shadowes flee away* ; that they may see their beloved face to face, and may become happy in a full fruition of him unto all eternity ; Yea 3. they may in faith ask a further measure of grace, that they may not stand still in this wilderness, but may go forward, that the stock of grace may increase and grow in their hands, and that a further measure of actuall and habitual strength may from time to time be let out to them ; he who said *I (e) beleeve*, might in faith say, *Lord, helpe my unbeloef* ; as we are commanded to *(f) grow in grace*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. so we are obliged to ask of God what he requireth of us, that *he who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure*, Philp. 2. 13. would make us grow in grace, and *(g) bear much fruit to the glory of his name* ; and we may ask in faith relying on the promise, *to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundance*, Mat. 13. 12. Mat. 25. 29. Luk. 8. 28.

(h) The 1. Gl'se
confuted.

I see no reason why it is commonly said, that we may not pray absolutely and in faith for the measure and degree, for the increase and further perfection of grace. Some do (h) *Ans.* because the measure and degree of grace is not absolutely necessary to salvation. But I would ask, if a further measure of grace be not necessary that we may bring forth more fruit, that we may glorifie God more, that we may be the more able to stand in the hour of temptation ? &c. and if it be thus necessary, unlesse our desires be carnall and selfish, they should be no lesse (but rather much more) peremptory and absolute for such a measure of grace, then for what is merely necessary for our Salvation and happinesse ; though we may dispense with our own comforts ; enlargement in duty, gracious manifestations and heart-melting in ordinances, peace, joy, assurance and all the consolations of the Almighty, as they are sweet and pleasant to our taste ; and be content to go mourning to Zion, if it seem good to the Lord, and if thereby his name may be magnified ; yet, we must not be slack and remisse

remission in our desires concerning that which may promote his service, and whereby we may glorify him more, we must not be easily put off and satisfied, nor bargain and compose for a little, or any thing whatsoever in stead of that.

2. It is (i) answered, that such or such a measure of grace is not absolutely promised. *Repl.* I would know what such do mean by an absolute promise? It is true, such a measure of grace is not promised to all and every one; but thus grace it self must not be absolutely promised, if, by an absolute promise, be understood, a promise that doth belong to every one; yea, there should be no absolute promise in all the word of God; because there is no promise there that doth belong, and hath been performed to all and every one: though then it be a very usual, yet it is a very gross mistake, to confound an absolute and universal promise; as if to be promised absolutely were nothing else but to be promised universally and to all. You will perhaps say, though no promises belong to all and every one, yet, some promises belong to all believers; and so have a limited kind of universality, and accordingly some sort of absoluteness. *Ans.* If a limited universality will make a promise absolute, that is not wanting in this case: for, all those whom the Lord hath appointed to be tall Cedars in his *Lebanon*, and to be strong men in his house, must have the promise of increase performed unto them; such shall be strong in grace. But, 2. if believers be the rule and object of absolute promises, so that these do belong unto, and shall be performed towards them, when they in faith do plead their accomplishment; even thus there shall be no absolute promise: For, what promises they thus call absolute, do not, cannot belong to believers, but to the unconverted elect before they believe; before the heart of stone be removed, and the seeds of grace sown in the heart: for, when this change is wrought the promise is fulfilled; so that after conversion we cannot (except upon a mistake of our estate and condition) pray for grace, (as to it's being and existence) nor plead those absolute promises at the Throne; nay, but we should rather praise God for what he hath done for, and to our souls, and say, not that we may be (k) ingrafted in the true vine, but that

(i) The second evasion confuted.

(k) Joh. 15. 2.

that being in him we may bring forth fruit abundantly. And then, 2. since unbelievers have not faith, they cannot pray in faith, and so thus cannot pray absolutely for faith: but, some will yet say, though believers be not the object to which those promises belong, yet, the Elect, and all the Elect, have an interest in them. *Ans.* 1. Yet, the Elect, before their conversion, cannot in faith (which they have not as yet) plead these promises, and so they cannot be said to pray absolutely for what is held forth in these promises; and therefore the consideration of their election must be impertinent for clearing the present question. But, 2. I cannot see in what propriety of speech, or according to what ground or reason the absoluteness of the promises, or of our petitions can be explained by this kind of universality; and what light can be brought from thence for determining this controversy?

You will then say, but what call you an absolute promise? For *ans.* we would distinguish between the promise, and the object of the promise; not the object to which, but whereabout it is conversant, *viz.* the thing promised: albeit it be gross to confound these two, yet the present debate appeareth to be occasioned in great part by that mistake, 1. then as to the promise it selfe, that must be accounted absolute which (as to the performance of it) doth not depend upon any condition required on our part, and thus an absolute promise is opposed to a conditionall promise, and so these which we called *Promises of Grace* must be absolute, because they do not suppose any gracious disposition in the subject that they may have their accomplishment. And these which we called *promises to grace* must be conditionall, because they require and suppose some qualification and condition on our part, that they may be performed to us: but then, 2. the thing promised may be said to be absolute, not because it abstracteth from any condition to be performed by us; but because it abstracteth from the circumstances of person, time, place, &c. as to its goodnesse, and conveniency, and that it may be the object of a promise: and this kind of absoluteness must be measured in reference to the promise it selfe, and not in reference to the way and manner of its performance and accomplishment: and such a
thing

thing may be said to be *absolutely* promised, because it doth not depend upon any other thing that it may become a fit materiall of a Divine promise, and a fit object for our prayers, and desires; that it doth not borrow its goodnesse from without, nor depend upon any extrinsecall and variable circumstances, nor upon any end, for the obtaining of which it may be conduible; so that it is intrinsically, and of it selfe, and thus absolutely, and indispensably good and desireable: and thus, such a thing may be said to be *absolutely promised*, because it is *absolutely good*, albeit the performance of such a promise depend upon some condition and qualification in him to whom the promise is made; and such a promise may thus *viz. objectively* be called absolute: and thus grace with every degree and further measure of it, both as to its being and graduall perfection, may be said to be absolutely promised; albeit upon another consideration, and if we have reference unto the way and manner of performance, grace it self may be said to be absolutely promised, and the encrease of it conditionally.

But you will then say, since the promise is the rule of prayer, and the measure of grace may be said to be conditionally promised, why should it not also be conditionally askt and prayed for? *Ans.* As we have shewn in what sense the promise may be said to be absolute, so we shall now, in answer to the question, show, 1. What it is to pray absolutely. 2. In what sense the promise must be acknowledged the rule of prayer. As to the first, we are said to pray absolutely for any mercy, not because the promise (whereupon our prayer is grounded) as to it's performance, doth exclude all conditions, or that we expect an answer without any consideration of him who prayeth; not regarding any fitnessse, or qualification in him to receive, what he asketh: for thus, none of the Saints could be said to ask any thing absolutely; not the immortal Crown; for that will only be given to the righteous, to him that overcometh, &c. not the encrease of grace, for that is only promised to him that is faithfull in a little; and grace, as to it's being and existence, is not promised to believers, (for, to them the promise is already accomplished) but to the

unconverted elect; and those with whom we have now to deal do maintain, that only grace it self is absolutely promised, which cannot, according to their hypotheses, be askt absolutely; because the unconverted (to whom only such absolute promises do belong) cannot pray in faith, nor lay claim to any promise, so long as they continue in that state.

Then to pray absolutely for any mercy, must be nothing else but to pray for it, 1. abstracting from all proviso's and conditions of expediency, or subserviency to such or such an end; 2. abstracting from all circumstances of person, time, place, &c. upon which it doth depend, and from which it doth, as it were, borrow its goodness; and thus to pray for it as a thing intrinsically, absolutely, universally and indispensably good, at all times, and to all persons; And, 3. to be so peremptory in our desires after it, that we will not compromise, nor bargain for any other thing in lieu of it: And thus we should pray absolutely for grace, and for its growth and increase. Who knoweth the worth of the least measure and degree of it? all the gold and rubies of the earth are not worthy to be laid in the ballance with it; who can set a price on it, and appoint the equivalent? it is of more worth and excellency, then that a compensation may be made for it: Thus we may not upon any terms sell or transact; only we must submit, and (upon the considerations forthwith to be named) acquiesce in that measure the Lord shall assign to every one.

As to the second, how should our prayers as to the present case be conform to the promises: for answer, we offer these few distinctions; 1. we would distinguish between prayer it self, and the return and answer of prayer. Hence, 2. we should distinguish between the presenting or offering up of our desires; and our expecting or waiting for an answer. 3. Let us distinguish between a simple desire (though never so intense and fervent) because of the goodness and amiableness of the object, and a confident desire grounded upon a Divine promise. 4. Let us distinguish between the promise abstractly and formally considered, and the object of the promise. Hence these conclusions in answer to the question.

Concl. 1. It is sufficient, that our prayers keep conformity with the promises as to the *object*, so that the matter of our petitions, be the object of a promise: This objective conformity was, that which we established, while we spake to the question in the general, Sect. 1. And therefore we must not make a comparison between the promises and our prayers formally considered; either, 1. as to the acts, for thus the promise is an intimation of the will of God to us, and prayer an intimation and directing of our desires, and the acts of our heart to God. Nor yet, 2. As to the manner, *nequa ad rem nec modum rei*; the promise may be delivered conditionally, and may include a precept, requiring such and such qualifications in him who would lay claim to it; from which our supplications may abstract, albeit the supplicant must endeavour the performance of the condition, to which the promise is entailed, that he may obtain what it holdeth forth; yea, he may pray for strength to perform the conditions; but then that precept cannot be the ground of our confidence, nor the promise to which it is annexed, but some other promise, intimating Gods purpose to help and assist us in that work; yea, the precept as such, and as it annexeth such a proviso to the promise, is a rule of our duty, but not a warrant for our prayer; and thus we may absolutely pray for what is conditionally promised; and when we pray, that we may be enabled to perform the condition, there must be a distinct petition, having a distinct, and another promise for the ground of our faith.

2. *Concl.* We may pray absolutely for the measure and degree of grace; albeit we cannot confidently wait and expect a return to our prayers, but by reflecting on the condition required on our part, and finding it wrought in and performed by us. Hence, *Concl. 2.*

3. *Concl.* We may desire, but we cannot confidently and in faith desire and ask, till we thus reflect upon the condition; and unlesse we desire upon the terms expressed, or involved in the promise. *Concl. 3.*

4. *Concl.* Prayer may be absolute, though its answer and return, the performing and fulfilling of our desires be conditional; *Concl. 4.*

conditional; the accomplishing of our desires and of the promises, may depend upon a condition, upon which our desires do not depend: albeit we must look to its performance, that our desires may be granted.

But it may be here enquired, whether, supposing the performance of the condition, we may confidently and in full assurance of faith, expect the fulfilling of the promise, as to the very particular desired? And what is the difference between our praying thus for grace, and our praying for outward and temporal things, which (as all confesse) must only be conditionally askt? *Ans.* As the Lord, according to his good pleasure, and to evidence the freeness of his grace, doth shew mercy and bestow grace on whom he will, so he doth give a greater or lesser measure of grace, when, and to whom he pleaseth: Yet, 1. The way expressed in the covenant, is thy way, the way prescribed unto thee, and in which thou must walk, if thou wouldst obtain the promised mercy. Yet, 2. if thou make conscience to perform the condition, the want of mo talents, is rather thy cross and tryal, then thy (1) sin, and in the issue, thou shalt be no looser, because that more strength was not let out to thee. But, 3. Though I deny not, that many Christians, who are very diligent in the performance of duties and attending the ordinances, continue still weak, and are left in a mourning and comfortlesse condition; yet it may perhaps be questioned, 1. whether such do perform the condition? because there may be much hypocrisy, self-seeking, pride, &c. at the root, and mixed with specious performances; and this gall and wormwood, may eat out of these their sweet savour: These dead (m) flies may spoil that precious oyntment, and cause it stink. And thus, 2. Some who are diligent in waiting upon ordinances, and going about duties, being proud, selfish, uncharitable, censorious, factious, &c. fall under a threatening, which may intercept the promised mercy, and counter-act their performances and duties, and in stead of the expected blessing, procure some one rod or other to awaken them, that they may consider their ways, and repent and abandon these evils. And, 3. The promise may be fulfilled and thou not discern, some

(1) I do not speak of the original want of Gods image, as if that were not our sin, but of an acquired impotency, as if that in the supposed case would be imputed to us according to the tenor of the covenant of grace.

(m) Eccl. 10. 1.

Some mist and darkness may so obnebulat the ayr, and some film overspread thine eyes, that thou canst not see, and art not fit to judge of the state and condition of thy soul: what though thou findest not such enlargement in duties, such a measure of assurance and joy, as others, yet thou mayest have more grace, and a greater stock, thou mayest spread at the root, in humility, self-denial, love, desire, &c. Though thou sendest not forth such branches of comfort, peace, and such melting of affections under ordinances, &c. And thus, though thy fruit be not so sensible, yet it may be as real and solid, as if thy tree did fairly blossom: And as such a dispensation may flow from the good pleasure of God, who will not have all the walkers to Zion to tread the same steps, nor have the same provision by the way; so from our selves, and from thy natural melancholick temper, and the temptations of Sathan fitted to thy inclination and natural infirmity; and thus there may be much unquietness, many fears and sad complaints, and much stirring of corruption where there is much grace; So that it is a difficult task to judge rightly here, and to passe a sentence concerning the measure of our graces, when we grow, and when we decay in grace: But the best rule to judge by, is our zeal for God and against sin, and our activity and diligence in the work of the Lord: And not our comforts and enlargements, or melting of affections, by which too many judge and passe a wrong sentence. Thus it is hard to judge of our selves; but as for others, as we cannot discern and infallibly know, who have performed the condition, who not, so we can hardly conjecture to whom the promise hath been fulfilled, to whom not.

Yet, 4. If at any time they, who could plead the performance of the condition, might complain that the promises were not performed to them, such a dispensation ought not be construed to be a denial, but rather a delay, a suspension and not a perpetual withholding; ere it be long there will be a compensation made, and such shall not be losers in the day of reckoning; for then (supposing there shall be different degrees of glory) his crown shall be no lesse (*) weighty and resplendent, then if here he had received and improven those talents.

(n) a Cor. 4.7

talents to which the promise did give him a right. Thus then, the promised mercy is only for a short time delayed and suspended, and the Lord hath his holy ends for that delay, which will abundantly satisfy his honest supplicants and expectants, when they shall once see his face and know his mind.

And herein is the difference between spiritual and temporal things, (and one main ground of the different manner of praying for these) that though spirituals may be withheld for a while from them who ask in faith ; yet, they shall not like temporals be finally and altogether withheld ; all the promises concerning spirituals shall one day be fulfilled, though not completely here, yet hereafter : for, when we come home to our Fathers house, grace shall not be destroyed, but compleated and perfected ; nothing then shall be wanting, neither part nor degree, only imperfections and defects, and what is repugnant unto, and not sureable with, such happiness, and that glorious condition, shall then be done away, (o)

(o) *Perfectio adveniens abolēbit quicquid imperfectionis servit. Calv. in loc.*

(p) *Hence we reject Cajetans gloss on that place, 1 Cor. 13. 10. where universally be affirmed, that whatsoever hath any imperfection in it shall be totally done away: quod non supplebitur ei quod ex parte est, altera pars, sed ipsum*

1 Cor. 13. 10. not only grace in the general, but every particular grace as to its nature and being, and to what gradual perfection it hath, shall then continue ; the gold shall abide and be made more pure, when the dross shall be done away and removed : though after that renovation it shall get a new name, and grace shall be turned into glory, yet, what perfection formerly was in the thing, shall still (p) remain, what light and knowledge, what assent, assiance, dependance, &c. is now in faith, shall then abide and be increased ; what love, zeal and estimation, &c. is now in hope and desire, shall not be destroyed, but perfected and enlarged, when in stead of that which we now call faith, shall be a blessed vision and immediate sight ; when we shall no more see darkly and through a glass, but shall behold the Lord face to face, 1 Cor. 13. 12. when

quod ex parte est tollitur, only be made an exception in love upon a strange ground, which we will not stay to examine. You will say, doth not the Apostle affirm, that knowledge shall vanish away, ver. 8. Ans. Not simply and totally, but as to its imperfections, both negative and privative. Neque enim ipse scientiæ & notitiæ habitus abolēbitur, sed alius fiet, tum qualitate, tum quantitate. Beza in 1 Cor. 13, 8. vid. Scholasticos in 3. sentent. dist. 36. & ad Thom. 1, 2. quest. 67.

in stead of desire and hope, shall be a full fruition, and the pure rivers of pleasure, joy and delight, *P/ 16. 10.*

And thus all prayers for grace shall at length be answered, and we shall receive all, and more then our hearts could desire, or our thoughts conceive and apprehend, *1 Cor. 2. 9.* and thus they who plead against our praying absolutely for the degree and perfection of grace, because that is not absolutely promised, nor to be given to all, may see how groundless their plea is; and yet, though it were true, it would not be sufficient as hath been shown.

But as to the promises of temporal things, they do not hold out Gods purpose, and an engagement to give the very particular in kind to all, who shall ask them aright; many in this life get not what they much desired and frequently petitioned, and after we come home, we will not stand in need of those things, there is provision enough for us in our Fathers house, and we must not discredit the place by longing for the broken slaves to which we did lean, or the nesty couches on which we did rest, while we were in a pilgrims condition, and wandering in this wilderness.

3. It is (9) answered, though all spiritual mercies be in themselves good and desirable, yet, in regard of us, this or that measure and degree may be hurtful and unexpedient, and in that case not fall under a promise, which concerning such things doth alwayes take in the proviso of expediency, suitability and subserviency to our good, in promoting of Gods glory. *Repl.* Though this be true in temporal things, which clothed with some circumstances may prove (and too often have been) a snare, and so hurtful and unexpedient for us; yet, upon what ground or parity of reason this should be, by any judicious Divine, applyed to grace, its measure and degree I know not; but, if it be true, that the School-men teach of moral virtues, that they cannot be abused, that none, nor the worst of men, can make an ill use of them, *nullus (x) malum male utitur.* This must more necessarily hold in spiritual things, in grace and in every degree and gradual perfection of it; yet, not so as if spiritual pride might not grow up with our graces, but that it cannot flow from grace, but from corrup-

tion:

(q) *M. Gee*
Treat. of Pray.
ch. 3. sect. 2.
pag. 126, 127.

(r) *Tho. 1. 2.*
quæst. 55. art.
4. old. Alph.
Cariel ad
loc. & ad art.
3. dub. 1, 2, 3.

(1) *Virtute
potest aliquis
male uti tan-
quam obiecto
quia cum male
sensit de vir-
tute, cum odit
eam vel super-
bis de ea
non autem
tanquam prin-
cipe usui, ita
scilicet quod
malus sit actus
virtutis.*

Thom. loc.
cit. ad 5.

tion: what the (1) Schoolmen say of vertue in the general, that it cannot be abused as a principle of action, yet it may become an object, if not an occasion of sin, this we deny not of grace: As Pagans made their moral vertues, and pharisaical hypocrites their devotion and superstitious performances, a matter of vain glory and ostentation; so the Saints (the most eminent of them, are not out of the reach of this temptation) are too ready to be puffed up through the apprehension of their spiritual excellencies, 2 Cor. 12. 7. and to look down upon others as below them, forgetting that the more we have received, we should be the more humble and thankfull: Sathan joyning with our corruption, can make the decay and overthrow of other sins, become (as it were) the seed of pride, and after we have gotten, and while we seem to pursue the victory, he may (if the Lord prevent not the snare) take us at a disadvantage; and it is one of his most subtle depths, that if he cannot puff us up with the conceit of our priviledges, graces and performances, then to fill our minds with high thoughts of our self-annihilation and humility; and thus to entertain high thoughts of our own low thoughts; to be proud that we are not proud; and to be high minded because we are not high minded; (that's to say, because we are not puffed up with such things which swell others, we will blow up and fill our selves with our own emptiness) But all this is a fruit, not of grace, but of corruption: Grace is a shield, which being improven, would ward off and prevent such abuses; its a fountain, that alwayes yields sweet and wholesome waters; it is a principle, whose acts are only and alwayes good; though those spiders within us, can extract poyson out of the most excellent oyntment, and can make grace an object matter, and (as it were) occasion of sin, to which of it self it is so much opposit: And if upon this account, we may not pray absolutely for a further measure and degree of grace, neither must we pray absolutely for grace, as to its essence, nor for that (2) seed, and the habits and principles of our spiritual life; for these also may be thus (3) abused; And the lesse the measure of grace be, the greater is the hazard of this abuse.

(1) 1 Joh.
3. 9.

(2) Nullum
est in hac vita
bonum quo bo-
mo pro sua li-
bertate non
possit male uti
aliquo modo,
Suar. ubi in
pra cap. 17.
168. 9.

But some perhaps will reply, that upon this very ground we ought not pray absolutely and peremptorily for spiritual things, because, albeit of themselves they be the good gifts of God, yet they may prove a snare, and become hurtfull in the use. *Ans.* That is not the adequat and sole reason, and though it were, yet the disparity is manifest; 1. Then the true and compleat reason, why temporals should not be absolutely askt, is, because they having no moral and intrinsecal goodness in them, nor any formal, direct and immediate tendency and reference to our happiness, may prove, and often have proven impediments and hinderances of hapiness, and occasions of eternal ruin; therefore, they should only be askt conditionally and relatively; that though they have a natural goodness in them, and are fit to nourish, refresh and comfort this bodily life, yea, and to be (as learning, parts, &c.) civil ornaments and qualifications of the whole outward man, and thus become blessings, when they are sanctified in the use yet since they have no spiritual goodness in them, and are so ready to be abused, we must only ask them as helps, and when, and so far only, as they may be subservient unto our spiritual and eternal good. But spiritual things as such, and because they have a necessary and immediat tendency to that great end, they may and ought to be absolutely askt: And it were a degrading and disparaging of grace, to desire and petition it with a limitation, condition or exception; 1. the things themselves being so excellent, so intrinsically and indispensibly good; 2. so good and usefull to us, and for our happiness; and, 3. so conform to the will of God, and so subservient to his honour: What can we then imagine for counterballancing so great goodness? And what condition can there be added for warranting us to dispence with so much goodnesse? and to part with such a price which may bring so much honour to God and happiness to our selves.

As to the second, The abuse of grace and spiritual privileges, is meerly accidental, and solely from our selves, no occasion, nor invitation being offered from the things themselves, but on the contrary, their sole inclination and tenden-

(f) *Virtute potest aliquis male uti tanquam obiecto sui: cum male sentis de virtute, cum odit eam vel superbis de ea non autem tanquam principio usus, ita scilicet, quod melius sit actus virtutis.*
 Thom. loc. cit. ad 5.

(1) 1. Joh.

3. 9.

(u) *Nihilum est in hac vita bonum quo homo pro sua libertate non possit male uti aliquo modo.*
 Suar. ubi supra cap. 17. / ed. 9.

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cy is towards the right work, and to keep our feet in a right path; but as for temporals, they being of themselves indifferent, as to the right and wrong use of them, and they (especially the abundance or excess of them) being fit baits to our lusts, and thus of themselves, as it were, occasions and temptations to sin; we must not be absolute and peremptory in our desires after them; the condition of expediency must alwayes be expressed or included; as we must be circumspect in the use of them, so we must be submissive in our desiring of them.

You will say, there is some hazard, from whatsoever fountain it flow, whether from our selves, or from the object; and should we not guard against that in our prayers?

Ans. Yet not so, as to pray conditionally for these excellent and necessary things, otherwise we may ask nothing absolutely: because (as we have said) the best and most necessary things, may be abused by our corruption, we must then absolutely and peremptorily ask, and with the thing it self ask the right use and improvement of it: And here it is not difficult to determine the (x) question we propounded concerning temporals. Here we may ask the thing and the condition; but we may not ask the thing upon condition and supposition, we must not add an *If*, we may as determinately, absolutely and peremptorily ask the qualification, as the thing it self; the sanctified use and right improvement of it, and that all abuse of it may be prevented, as well as that we may have it; we must not make a divorce and separation, yea, not so much as by way of supposition, so as to offer that up prayer-ways to God: We then may, and should deprecate the abuse; and pray that it may have no place; but we may not suppose the possibility of abuse, and under that supposition rest content with the want of the thing, but we must in our desires and prayers peremptorily set our selves, both against the want of the thing and the abuse of it, and that such a supposition may be excluded; and that there may be no place for such abuse, but that we may be holy, humble, charitable, &c.

(x) viz. Whether we may ask peremptorily the thing, and that the condition may be placed.

It seemeth to be liable to a very harsh construction, to say or imagine, that a further measure and degree of grace may be hurtfull and inexpedient to us in whatsoever case or combination of circumstances; nor know I any ground that can be alledged with the least appearance of probability for such an assertion: It is true, not only outward and bodily things, such as riches, honours and pleasures, but also parts and moral endowments, yea and the common gifts of the spirit, have often proven snares; the Lord in his just judgment may, according to that threatening, *Mal. 2. 2. curse all such blessings*; but, how grace can become a snare, and how the Lord may be said to curse it, is not easie to conjecture; that he never threatened, neither know I how such a thing is possible: O! how doth it sound in a Christians ear, to say, that *grace or holiness is cursed*? Though the Lord may remove our talents, for our not improving of them, yet all our talents of grace, as such are blessings, and cannot incline or dispose us to any sin; what though some eminent in grace, have fallen into grosse and grievous sins, and though some have been puffed up with their priviledges, performances, &c. yet that was not a fruit of grace, but of sin not totally subdued; it was not, because there was much strength of grace in the heart; but because there was not more; and because the principles and habits of grace were not awakened, and further strengthened and stirred up by actual influences and the quickning motions of the spirit, that such did fall; and though they did take, yet no occasion was given from their graces to become proud; so that grace can never be called a snare or temptation; though corruption, when yielded unto, and not watched against, will never want an object, but will fancy and make to its self an occasion where there is none to be found.

But some may yet reply, what? should we not submit to the holy and wise dispensations of God, not murmuring and repining, because our Lord doth not intrust us with mo talents? Might he (in the parable, *Mat. 25. 15.*) who received the two, have said, nay Master, but I must have five as well as my fellow servant? *Ans.* Though he might not murmur and repine, but should highly have prized and

(y) *Talentum*
significat qua-
libet Dei do-
na, Basil. in
reg. brevior.

inter reg. 253.

(z) *Alli ibi* *talents* must be
of one nature,
and therefore
since he who
received only
one, cannot be
said to have
received a ta-
lent of grace,
fo, &c.

(a) *Hac talen-
ta* (scholasticis
vocantur gra-
tiz gratis da-
ta, & posteri-
ora gratiz
gratum faci-
entes, sed mi-
nus commode;
cum omnis
gratia nobis
gratis detur
& sola Christi
iustitia nos
gratos faciat.

(b) *In hisce*
spiritualibus
bonis major
vis est, & cer-
rior veritas, &
fructuosior pro-
fectus, & pu-
rior perfectio.
Bon. de proc. rel. sex cap.

18. 20.

(c) Phil. 4. 4.

(d) 1 Pet. 1. 10.

(e) Pl. 4. 6.

thankfully acknowledged the little he had received, yet in zeal to the glory of his Lord, he might have said, [Lord let me also have five (if you extend the parable only to talents of grace, though the (y) scope of it would point out another kind of (z) talents] that I may be the more enabled to serve and honour thee.]

But for a more full answer to the question, we would remember, that there are (a) *talents of gifts*, such as knowledge, utterance, and the extraordinary privileges of some in the primitive Church, as prophecies and tongues, 1 Cor. 13. 8. And there are *talents of grace*, in which the life of religion doth directly and essentially consist; in which, as (b) *Bonaventure* well said, there is *greater power, truth, purity and perfection*. And as in all this enquiry after spirituals, we did only speak of saving and sanctifying grace, as it is contradistinguished from whatsoever gifts, though never so precious and excellent, if not of themselves sanctifying and saving, and if common to the elect and reprobate; so now we affirm that what fervency, importunity and zeal, we did plead for in prayer, as to any particular and determinate object, must be limited to the talents of grace, and not of gifts; we may not peremptorily desire and pray for such a measure of gifts, whereby we may edifie and do good unto others, but should rest content, as with our station; so with the measure of gifts and abilities, it hath pleased our master to put in our hands, albeit we may, and ought improve that stock he hath entrusted us with to the best advantage, that by our diligence our master may be honoured, and our talents multiplied: And this moderation of our desires, should not only be extended to gifts of *edification*, such as the gifts of preaching, praying, &c. But also to gifts of *consolation*, such as assurance, peace, joy, &c. (as these are sweet to our taste and a part of our reward) though we be allowed to (c) *rejoyce*, and must give all (d) *diligence* to make our election sure, &c. yet we must not idolize our comfort; but must patiently wait Gods time of (e) *lifting up* the light of his countenance upon us: But talents of grace being of another nature; and our sanctification consisting in them and their right

right improvement; we should be peremptory in our desiring of, and praying for them; and we need add no proviso or limitation: And thar servant might well have said, *O Lord, though these two talents be enough for me, and more then I can well improve, yet let me have more grace, and strength to improve them to the honour of thy name.*

Yet I do not deny, that we should submit unto, and carry our selves patiently under the want of such and such a measure of grace; 1. as it is our own losse and misery; 2. in that our Lord will allow us no more provision for our journey, nor intrust us with a greater stock; and 3. in that the different dispensation of grace, as to its measure and gradual perfection, may serve (though in a way unknown to us) to proclaim the wisdom and glory of God, his power, and the freeness of his grace; its our part in humility to adore the depths of his counsel, and in silence submit to all his dispensations towards us; especially, if thereby his glory might be promoted: *Moses* his prayer, *Exod.* 32. 32. And *Paul* his wish, *Rom.* 9. 3. are patterns of a more illimited submission to any dispensation, that might be subservient to that high end; to be accursed from Christ, is worse then to be a weak Christian; and to be blotted out of Gods book, then to want light to discover, and whereby we might discern our names written there.

But abstracting from these considerations, our desires after grace should be most absolute and peremptory; and our endeavours in the diligent use of the ordinances for encreasing and strengthening of it, should be incessant and without wearying; and as the want of a further measure of grace and strength, doth render us lesse fit and able to serve God, it should be mater of sad regrave, and of continual complaints to him, who as he is zealous of his own glory, so will he no doubt pity such, whose sad affliction is, that they cannot serve him better. *Tantum possumus in negotio Religionis, quantum volumus*, may admit an orthodox sense, if we did more earnestly desire and diligently seek, we would obtain.

(f) O! let us praise the Lord, who hath not dealt sparingly with us, we are not straitned in the promise; our charter is large and exceeding broad; what canst thou desire, either

(g) *A word of application.*

(g) 1 Tim. 4. either (g) pertaining to life or godliness, which thou mayest not read in the promise; or what is it that he is not ready to give, if thou wouldst ask? thou mayest confidently plead thy right, thou shalt be no looser that thy party is thy judge; he will own his own bond, and will perform his word, though justly he might cast thy bill over the barr, and give out a sentence of forfeiture, because of thy not performance of the condition, and thus nullifying the contract, which was mutual; but as a loving father, he will pardon and cover thy failings, and will withhold no part of the inheritance, because of thy bewailed infirmities; and he, who said, *I will give whatsoever ye shall ask*, will give whensoever, and whatsoever thou askest.

But ah! Though we be not straitned in the promise, yet we are (h) straitned in our own bowels; our (i) desires, though they be enlarged as hell, after the empty Cistern, yet how easily are we satisfied, how (k) immoderately moderate are our desires after grace? a little of that; yea, rather a shadow and picture of holiness contents us; as much as will silence a clamorous conscience, and may be a foundation for a false peace, will do the turn. Oh worldling! why dost thou not consider, that one day, one hour, one moment will rob thee of all thy earthly treasures? This night, O (l) fool, thy soul may be required of thee; and to whom then shall those things fall, which thou hast purchased with the lose of thy soul and the wrath of God? Ah, how many metamorphosed *Nebuchadnezzars* do live in the world? yea, in (but are not of) the Church and house of God, who have the heart of beasts, and are satisfied with the grasse (I may say dung, for such it will prove in the issue) of the earth: What? wast thou made for no higher end? may not thy intellectual and immortal soul, if thou wouldst reflect upon its nature, privileges and excellency, rebuke thy folly, and discover the vanity of thy purchase and travel? But since thou must have these things, why dost thou not then take the right course? thou lovest these trifles, because thou seekest them first, and givest them the precedency in thy desire and endeavour: or if the Lord giveth thee them, whilest thou so greedily

(h) 1 Cor.
6. 12.

(i) Hab. 2. 5.

(k) *Because inordinately, our desires not answering the excellency and necessity of the object.*

(l) Luk. 12.
20.

greedily covets them, he giveth them in wrath, and with his curse; and thou mayest fear, least, *while the meat is in thy mouth Gods wrath / ease upon thee*, as it did on these Israelites, *Pf. 78. 30.* If spirituals have the precedency, then, and only then are we in the right way to have temporals added as a blessing, *Mat. 6. 33.* Though then thou mayest desire these outward things, because of their suitableness to thy bodily exigences, and to supply thy necessities, yet thou canst not desire them aright, neither canst thou enjoy them as a blessing, unless thy desire be, 1. *spiritual*, as to the motive; the main and ultimate design; 2. *moderate*, as to the measure; 3. *conditional*, as to the manner; 4. *relative* to the great end; 5. *subordinate* also thereunto; 6. *submissive*, as to the event; and, 7. *believing*, and mixed with faith in Gods care and providence in disposing all things to his own glory, and the good of his honest supplicants. But for spirituals, there is no other *measure* of our desiring them, but to desire them *without measure*; *In eo non potest esse nimium quod debet esse maximum.* What (m) Bernard said of our love as terminated in God, may well be applied to our desire and endeavours after grace, (whereby, *pro modo*, we enjoy and are united to God) that the *modus*, should be *sine modo*; we should be boundlesse and unsatiable, resolute, fervent and peremptory in our affection; we must (n) *earnestly covet these best blessings.* Here the Poet (n) 1 Cor. did hit right (o) *Verus amor nullum novit habere modum.* True love, when pitched upon a right object, should be boundlesse and illimited.

(m) *Modus diligendi Deum, est sine modo diligere,* Bern. de dilig. D. cum in princ. vid. Thom. 2, 2. quest. 27. art. 6.
(n) *Properius eleg. 3.*

Sect. 3.

For whom should we pray? not for the dead

Whether and after what manner for the reprobate, and those who have committed that unpardonable sin against the holy Ghost, &c.

(a) Jam. 1. 8.

WE need not ask if we should pray for others? the Law of God, the (a) royall law of love, and the constant practice of the Saints do point out this duty. and as a threefold cord bindeth us thereunto, first, then God hath commanded us to pray for others; *Jam. 5. 16. 1 Job. 5. 16.* Secondly, he hath promised to answer, *1 Job. 5. 14, 16. Jam. 5. 15.* Thirdly, he hath accordingly answered those prayers that have been put up for others, *Gen. 20. 17. Exod. 33. 17. Job. 42. 9, 8.* and though he be a reprobate for whom the Saints do pray, yet they shall not lose their labour, their prayers shall return into their own bosome, they shall not return empty and without a blessing, but shall bring with them an answer of peace to the supplicant, *Psa. 35. 13.* Fourthly, not only the Godly have required the mutuall help of one anothers prayers, *2 Cor. 1. 11. 1 Thes. 5. 25. 2 Thes. 3. 1. Heb. 13. 18.* but the wicked also, (as being convinced of the need they stood of the Saints prayers, and the good which might be expected from thence) *1 King. 13. 6. Act. 8. 24.* Fifthly, as the Saints have desired others to pray for them, so they have been carefull to (b) perform that duty towards others, *Col. 1. 9. 2 Thes. 1. 11. Exod. 32. 31. Exod. 33. 16. Numb. 21. 7. 1 Sam. 7. 9.* and Christ our head and leader, while on earth, prayed not only for his disciples, *Job. 17.* and for the unconverted elect, *v. 9. 20.* but also for his bloody persecutors, *Luk. 23. 34.* And how did he weep and pathetically lament over apostate Jerusalem? *Luk. 19. 41. Luk. 13. 34.* and he now liveth in heaven to make continuall intercession for his people. Sixthly, not only hath our blessed Saviour thus by his example taught us this point of our duty, but by his command, leaving us a pattern in that (c) comprehensive directory, *Mat. 6. 9.* to pray for others whensoever we pray for our selves, and

what-

(b) Orat apostolus pro plebe orat plebs pro apostolo, oro te omnia in contra erant, caput pro omnibus intercessit, August in Pla. 24.

(c) Idco non dicimus, pater meus, sed tu scis, nec da mihi sed da nobis, quia unitatis magister voluit privatum preces fieri, ut scilicet suis pro se tantum precetur Cypri in lib. de erat. Dum,

whatsoever we ask for our selves ; thus we are not there taught to say, *my Father, give me, forgive me, &c.* but, *our Father, give us, forgive us, &c.* And thus we are more straitly bound to that duty, then if either in the preface, or the close there had been an expresse command insert to pray for others ; for thus we are taught to pray for our brethren not only at some seasons and occasions, or when we will, but alwayes whensoever we pray for our selves ; and not to ask only some few things for them, but whatsoever we ask to our selves ; and why should we not wish, desire and petition all those good things which we desire to our selves, to those whom we are bound to (d) love as our selves ? what indigence and (e) necessity will drive us to ask for our selves, that brotherly love should draw us to desire and petition to others : and love being a more kindly motive then necessity, and the good of others a more noble attractive then *self interest*, it must be a better evidence of sincerity to pray for others, then to pray for ourselves.

You will say must we then pray for all and every one ? For Answer we shall bring some conclusions partly negative partly affirmative.

Concl. 1. We abominat the Popish conceit of praying for the dead ; as, 1. foolish and unprofitable ; for after death the judgement, *Heb. 9. 27.* then we must appear before the tribunal of Christ, and be statd into an inalterable condition, which all the devotion of Papists, all their masses and supplications cannot change ; 2. as groundlesse and unwarrantable, having no command nor precedent in Scripture, yea nor from the first and purest antiquity ; and reason can here have no place, for the Saints want no good, and they fear no evil, (which are the two occasions of prayer mentioned by the Apostle (f) *Jam. 1. 5.* and *5. 13.*) and an irrevocable sentence is already past upon the damned ; where the tree is fallen, there it must ly for ever, *Ecles. 11. 3.* the evening is come, and there can be no more working in the Lords vineyard, every one must now receive his reward according as he hath employed the day past ; David would pray no longer for his child when he heard it was dead, the reason he bringeth in reference to the childs bodily life and being here again in

(d) *Mat. 19. 19*
(e) *Pro se ora-
re necessitas cog-
git, pro altero
autem charitas
fraternitatis
brutatur, Aut op-
eris imper in
Mat. cir. prin-
tom. 2. hom. 14.*

Concl. 1.

(f) *The two
grounds of
prayer menti-
oned by the A-
postle, 1. the
want and ab-
sence of some
good ; Et de
visitatione
2. The pre-
sence or fear
of some evil.
κακωδον
τις εν υμιν ;
ορωσιν γε-
στω.*

the world, is applicable to the state and condition of the soul; there can be no alteration after death; and therefore he would pray no more for either the child's bodily being here again, or concerning the eternal portion, or spiritual condition of his soul, 2 Sam. 12. 23. The Saints are now at home, and rest secure till the day of the resurrection, when soul and body being united shall partake of glory and happiness (according to their several capacities) to all eternity; and till that day they rest upon God's word, (as to the resurrection of their bodies) which is another kind of (g) word, then the word of promise which believers on earth plead in their prayers. It is the sentence of a Judge, and would an earthly Judge take it well, if any man should petition him to own and stand to his sentence? They are not now on their way, nor in the (h) condition of a *Viator* and traveller; they are now above ordinances, they are no more under the means, what then can prayer profit them?

As for the popish *Purgatory*, (that Chapel in which all these Saints are convened, who call for the prayers and masses of the Roman Church, or rather that prison in which are detained those captives, till the Romanists, by their devotion, purchase their liberty) our Divines, long since, have thrown down the imaginary partition wall betwixt that goal and hell, and have shown, that those (i) prisoners shall never be able to pay the uttermost farthing, and therefore shall never be set at liberty: and it was no difficult task to overthrow a house that was built upon the sand of Platonick dreams, poetical fictions and humane and antisciptural tradition. I do not deny that it was an ancient custom of the Church, to pray for the dead; yet, (k) *from the beginning it was not so*. We will not now enquire after the punctual time when it began, nor yet what was the occasion of that custom; yet, it were an easy work to show, that the ancient custom doth no way favour the Roman cause; (l) Dr. *Usher* and Dr. *Forbesse*, Mr. *Perkins* and several other orthodox Divines have undertaken that task, and performed it to the satisfaction of all impartial readers: yea, that great (m) Antiquary, Dr. *Usher*, hath demonstrated [that *Purgatory*, wherewith the Romish

(R) *This appears to me to be the main ground of difference, which, with submission, I offer to the consideration of the judicious.*
 (h) *Proces. geminus lacrymarum (sunt) ailectum in studio versantium in agone, sed dantium, non victorum in calo triumph. antium.* Tilen.
 Syn. part. 2.
 diff. 49. § 22.
 (i) *Mat. 5. 26.*
 (k) *Mat. 19. 8.*
 (l) *Dr. Usher, in his answer to the challenge made by a Jesuit, § of prayer for the dead.* Dr. *Forbesse*, *instr. dist. theol. lib. 13. cap. 9. &c.*
 M. *Perkins*, *Dem. of the Problem. pag. 531, 561. &c.*
 (m) *Dr. Usher* *loc. cit. § of Purgatory, pag. (mibi) 190.*

Clergy doth now delude the world, is a new device, never heard of in the Church of God, for the space of a thousand years after the birth of our Saviour.] Yet, I deny not in the sixth Century, when the mystery of iniquity (which began to work in the dayes of the Apostles, 2 *Thes.* 2. 7.) was grown up to a considerable stature, and was in great part established by a Law, that then many materials were provided, yea, and many stones laid of that structure; but the after-builders being more wise, demolished much of that work, that they might rear up (if not a more sumptuous, yet) a more profitable building: Nay, I deny not, that long before that time, (before the dayes of Gregory the great, that great Innovator and Patron of monkish superstition, and grand builder of Purgatory.) *Tertullian* and *Origen* did make way for that dream; the one, *viz.* *Tertullian*, being the (u) first amongst Christians, who (o) pleaded, that Prayers should be offered up for the dead: but, first, he turned *Montanist*; for, while he was Orthodox, with what indignation did he (p) mock the Pagans for their praying for the dead? who could have imagined, that he himself should have approved that custom? But thus we may see, that this lesson was first learned from the Pagan Academy. As for the other, *viz.* (q) *Origen*, who is reputed to be the first who espied the fire of Purgatory, having brought a prospect from the Platonick Schools, whereby he might discern and take up this *ignis fatuus*: but, we dar not confidently father this conceit upon that learned man, albeit now it may be found in his Writings, knowing how miserably these have been corrupted and adulterated; and yet, the Purgatory mentioned there, is far different from, and much unlike to the Romish.

But, since Papists have no other Plea but Antiquity and humane Tradition (though, as we said, the first and purest times were ignorant of this peece of devotion, and though the first custom of praying for the dead, was not founded upon the popish Purgatory, which was not then acknowledged, yea, and

(o) Albeit before that time the Saints did mention the *Defuncti*, (especially the *Martyrs*) in their prayers; yet, that was only, 1. by way of commemoration, proposing them as an example worthy of their imitation. 22 By way of congratulation: but not, 3. by way of petition, as if they had any thing from on for the *Martyrs*.

(o) *Tert. lib. de monog. cap. 10.* where he layeth this charge upon the widowers 10

pray frequently for their dead husband. (p) *Tert. de test. anim. cap. 4.* (q) *Origen. lib. 2. de prom. cap. 10, 11, 12. hom. 3. in Psal. 36. hom. 13. in Hieron.*

(r) Or shall I I may say not discerned, it being then as a (r) *terra incognita* (ay, *et incognita*.) I would ask, why they disclaim their Patrons in so many particulars, and are ashamed to own or build upon the first foundation? and even these materials which they now make use of, must first be polished by School-subtilties (so that the first owners would scarce know and could not acknowledge them for legitimat) before they imploy them in their building, or upon them erect thier several *limbs* and chambers of hell. 1. If *Origen* must be their Patron for *Purgatory*, why do they not with (s) him (if we may judge of his opinions from his Writings) also maintain, that the devils at length shall, by the mercy of God, be saved and liberated from their torments? Or, if that seem too gross, yet, 2. why do they not, with these whom (t) *Thomas* citeth from *Austin*, affirm, that albeit the devils should be tormented for ever, yet, all men, though never so wicked or flagitious, should at length be delivered from the torments of hell, since the ancient custom of praying for the dead (upon which they build) did exclude none, no not the worst of sinners? Or, 3. if they will not plead for all that are in hell, yet, why do they not allow the liberty to plead for some few, which their (u) *Damasen* hath granted? affirming, that by the prayers of the Saints some have been delivered out of hell; as the Emperor *Trajan* by the prayers of (x) *Gregory* the first, and *Falconilla* by the prayers of *Thecla*. 4. If it be thought too hard a task for them to pull souls from hell, yet why do they not, with (y) *Theophilaet* (one of their grand pillars of invocation for the dead) affirm, that they may help them who are not yet cast, (though deceased) but are ready to be cast into hell, having died in their infidelity and other grievous sins? Thus it is reported of *Dunstun*, that after he knew that the soul of *Edwin*, King of *England*, was to be carryed into hell, never ceased to pray for him untill he got that sentence repealed, and *Edwins* soul transferred unto the place of the penitent, viz. their

(r) *Lib. 2. de prin. cap. 6. lib. ib. 3. cap. 6. tom. 18. in evang. Johan. bom. 1. in Levitic. But how far contrary is this to what he affirmeth in other places; and in his Lamentation he affirmeth, that he was condemned to everlasting punishment, and could be then think that the devils at length would escape.*

(t) *Thom. in (sup. quest. 99. art. 2. in corp. ex Aug. lib. 21. de civit. Dei cap. 17. 18. vld. Chryl. bom. 21. in Añs, August. Encherid. cap. 110. & de civit. Dei lib. 21. cap. 24.*

(u) *Serm. de Defunct. (x) And yet Gregory himself professeth, that those who die in their sins are no more to be prayed for than the devils, Dialog lib. 4. cap. 44. (y) Non dixit manus cum qui postquam occiderit, mittit, &c. Theoph. in Luc. 12. 3.*

Purgatory. 5. Why do they not at least plead with (2) *Chrysostome*, *Altisiodorensis* and *Porretanus*, that albeit, neither these, who already are in hell, or who are sentenced thither, and ready to be cast in, can be wholly delivered from that place of torment, yet their pains there may be mitigated by the prayers of the Saints ? (a) *Damasceus* his fable concerning the skull of a dead man (whom (b) *Thomas* and many others affirm to have been a Pagan and idolatrous Priest) which should have uttered these words unto *Macarius* the Egyptian Anchorite [when thou dost offer up thy prayers for the dead, we (who are in hell) receive some little ease of our torment.] (c) *Mendoza* thinks this skull not to be the head of one that was damned, but of a just man in Purgatory ; but (d) *Bellarmino* is content this history be accounted apocryphal : but as to the testimonies we have alledged, to which may be added many mo, and that *πολυθρῶλλον*, and often inculcated aphorism, which the Master (e) of Sentences doth cite from *Augustine*, and approve, *Prayers for the dead, do either profit them to the obtaining of a full pardon, or to the diminution and mitigation of their torment*, Papists now think it safest for them not to mention these, and *Bellarmino* only taketh notice of that passage of *Augustine*, telling us, that the learned father by damnation, did understand the pains of purgatory ; which strange glosse, as it is contrary to *Lombard* and all others who make use of that passage, so to the words and their distinction, which must import an opposition, and warrant us to infer from *Bellarmino's* interpretation, *That those who are in purgatory shall never obtain the remission of their sins*.

Thus we see that Papists, though they would make us believe, that they embrace the doctrine of the fathers as a rule of faith, yet do cry up or cry down, follow or reject what these say, according as that maketh for or against their interest and opinion : And they do not scruple to disclaim those fancies we have mentioned, though more clearly asserted by them, then what they in this controversy would father upon them ; because these conceits were not so advantageous for the Popes treasury, nor so fit for feeding the Priests bellies ;

and

(2) Chrysost. in *Acta hom.*
21. in *epist.*
ad Philip.
hom. 2. *id.*
Thom. in 4.
sent. dist. 45.
quæst. 2. art. 2.
(a) Damas.
loc. cit.
(b) Thom.
in *lib. 4. sent.*
dist. 45. quæst.
2. art. 2. ad
quæstum.
(c) Alph.
Mendez.
cont. theol.
quæst. 6. *sect.*
5.
(d) Bellar. de
purgat. *lib. 2.*
cap. 18. *As*
fortasse melius
rejecerantur
ut Apocrypha
qua afferuntur
de illo cranio
non enim in
libro, &c.
(e) Lomb. 4.
sent. dist. 45. ex
Aug. Ench.
cap. 110. quibus
profunt
suffragia aut
ad hoc profunt
ut plena fiat
remissio, aut
tolerabilior
sit ipsa damnatio
— medio-
criter malis
suffragantur
ad panæ mitigationem.

(f) *Certum
est Ecclesia
suffragia non
prodesse beatis
nec damnatis,
sed solum iis
qui in Purga-
torio degunt--
id quod do-
cent omnes
scholastici, &c.
Bellar. loc. cit.*

and such is *Bellarmines* impudence, that as if none of these particulars had ever been mentioned, or maintained by any of the learned, he dare confidently (f) affirm, *It is so be certain, that the suffrages of the Church do not profit either the damned or the blessed, but only those who are in Purgatory, as all the Schoolmen* (saith this bold man) *do maintain* With *Augustine*. But the Jesuit and his complices, had reason to expunge, 1. the damned out of their roll, knowing that they would wait long before the devil and the damned would send them money, that they might say mass for them; and the living will hardly be perswaded, that the popish devotion will bring *their friends* from hell. 2. As for the Spirits in glory, their condition were miserable, if they stood in need of our help; and wherefore (would Papists say) should we pray to them who stand in need of our prayers?

You will say, though the Spirits of just men, made perfect, be happy in the fruition of God, and the assured expectation of the resurrection of their bodies, yet why may not both we and they pray for the consummation of their happiness? *Ans.* I grant, that certainty of success doth not exclude, but rather suppose the means, and may be a notable encouragement to use them; but wherefore should they, who have already used the means, and now are begun to enjoy the end, use them any more? and far less should others undergo such a needless task for them; who will go to buy after the market day is past? they have run the race and finished their course, and now they must rest from their labours, and eat the sweet fruit thereof unto all eternity, *Rev. 14. 13.* And therefore *Bellarmino* had reason to confess, that our prayers can do them no good; albeit it be certain, and we might from many pregnant testimonies clearly demonstrate, that those fathers, from whom the custom of praying for the dead took its rise, did (yea especially) pray for those, whom they supposed to enjoy the crown of glory.

Thus the popish Rabbles finding no place, either in heaven or hell, where they could vent their wares, at length they espied a middle place, where with greater advantage they might proclaim the market, though earth must be the place
where

where the money must be laid down, for their merchants' grand axiom is, *no pay no masse*, no trust, no not for one hour; but if you bring their hire in your hand, these mountebanks will promise you a good peny-worth; though they cannot ascend so high as heaven, nor descend so low as hell, yet they will ply a voyage to Purgatory, and from thence, by the cords of their prayers and masses draw out souls lying in torment; one thing they are sure of, that thus they shall draw moneys from the cabins of the living, and though they drive no spoil from Purgatory (as having no ground of quarrel against that place, since the fire of purgatory maketh their kitchens to smoke, and (g) *provideth* a portion for their fat bellies) yet they shall make a good booty on earth; and thus, though these prayers and masses (like the Pagan (b) idols) *can neither do good nor evil* to the dead, yet they both profit and hurt the living, the Priests lose not their labour, but the heirs and friends of the defunct find the smart; they buy at a dear rate that which is of no value.

Concl. 2. We are not obliged, we are under no divine command to pray for those, whom we know to have committed the sin against the holy Ghost: this is that *sin unto death*, for which the Apostle will not command us to pray, 1 Joh. 5. 16. It is the blasphemy that God will never pardon, *Mat. 12. 31, 32.* Its impossible that they, who fall into this sin, can renew themselves again unto repentance, *Heb. 6. 4, 6.* God hath determin'd (and revealed this his purpose) never to shew mercy unto them, nor give them grace to repent.

The popish Doctors from these Scriptures, especially from the first, would collect their anti-scriptural distinction of mortal and venial sins, whom *Calvin* and *Beza* on the place do well confute: The Rhemists, by the sin unto death there mentioned, will have us to understand the sin of *final impenitence*, and those mortal sins whereof men never repent; and (i) *Cajetan* his conjecture is not unlike to this, who thinketh, that the Apostle there, by the sin unto death, meaneth, a purpose never to leave and forsake sin untill death. And *Alf* a (k) *Castro* doth not dissent, while by the unpardonable

(g) This strange fire must have a strange effect, order fires can serve to dress, bake, &c..

(b) Isa. 41. 23. Jer. 10. 5. *Concl. 2.*

(i) Nulla iniquitas ex proprio genere est peccatum ad mortem, sed aliunde habet quod sit ad mortem, viz. ex parte peccantis, si ita afficitur sit ad peccatum ut vellet in eo per severare usque ad mortem, *Cajetan. in 1. Joh. 5. 16.*

(k) Est ali-quod peccatum quod nunquam remittitur, hoc autem est duritia cordis qua homo renuit usque ad finem vitæ remissionem peccati per penitentiam accipere. *Alf. de Castro ad vers. hæref. lib. 12. sect. peccatum. bar. 6.*

unpardonable sin, he understandeth the hardness of heart whereby the sinner refuseth to the end of his life to receive pardon by repentance. And thus those authors deny (as *Caljesan* confesseth) that by the sin against the holy Ghost, is meant any speciall sin, but only some extrinsecall aggravation of any sin, and thus every sin (if not repented of) may become the blasphemy against the holy Ghost. It were impertinent for us now to digresse so far as to confute those men; and particularly to enquire wherein this sin did consist, but we may suppose from the clear testimony of Scripture, 1. that there is such a particular sin; 2. that it is unpardonable.

(l) Rhem. on
1 Joh. 5. 16.

Ol but (say (l) the *Rhemists*) it is great blasphemy in the *Calvinists* to affirm, that there is any sin which in this life cannot be pardoned, for the Church hath often prayed and been heard for hereticks, Jewes, Turkes, Apostats &c. and therefore all sins whatsoever must be pardonable so long as the committers are in this world; and (saith *Alf. (m) a Castro*) it was the heresie of the (n) *Armenians* to affirm that any sin in this life is unpardonable. *Ans.* Behold the impudence of erroneous and blindfolded men, who dar accuse orthodox Divines of blasphemy for teaching what is expressly asserted in the Scriptures, and which (a) *Augustine*, their own (p) *Beda*, and many eminent Divines being convinced by the clear testimony of the word of God long before them professed, and maintained: and it were not worth the while to confute a dream so directly contrary to the Scriptures of truth; we do not deny that many grievous sins have been pardoned, and that Turkes, Pagans, (who are not capable of this sin) and heretiks, have been converted, but never any who committed this sin against the holy Ghost obtained pardon. And (q) *Richardus de S. Victore*, his distinction is vain and ridiculous, who will have that sin to be called unpardonable not in respect of the remission, on of the fault, but in respect of the remission and relaxation of the punishment, so that albeit he who (r) committed that sin by his repentance did obtain a pardon of the fault, yet he behoved to undergo the punishment. *Alf.*

(m) *Alf. a Castro* loc. cit.

(n) *Heresis Armenorum.*

(o) *August de Serm dom in monte prophe siem,*

(p) *Beda in*
1 Joh. 5.

(q) *Richard. de Sancto Victore* apud *Alf. a Castro* loc. cit.

(r) *Isa us qu amvis penitencia facta, culpa remittatur oportet tamen ut omne peccatum debitum solvat.*

(s) *Theophyl. Mat. 12.*

a *Castro* having alleadged (s) *Theophyl.* &c also for this opinion dorth

doth prefer it to *Augustines*, and joyneth with these Authors. We will not stay to canvass this strange doctrine; only in a word, 1. Can the fault be pardoned and a punishment inflicted? after the cause is removed, the effect must cease; 2. Is the punishment capable of pardon? then all suffering must be sin; 3. Doth not the Apostle expressly affirm, that its impossible that such should repent? and it were as impossible that they should be eternally punished, if they did repent: a *damm'd penitent* is such a monster, as never was nor shall be. I do not say, that this blasphemy is unpardonable, because it is greater then the mercy of God, or the worth and merit of Christs blood; as if God could not of his free mercy pardon it, or Christ by his blood have purchased a pardon unto it: But because God hath determined never to shew mercy, nor give repentance, and Christ will not interceed for such a one as hath fallen into that sin.

And the Lord having revealed his purpose not to pardon that sin, will lay no bond on us to interceed for a pardon unto it; so highly doth he value that eminent exercise, and so tender is he of his Saints, and so carefull to provide an encouragement to them when they are thus employed, that he will not command us to work, when he giveth us no promise for our encouragement, and when we know we shall not meet with successe; and therefore, saith the Apostle in the Lords name, *I do not say ye shall* (or that there is an obligation lying upon you to) *pray for them, who have sinned unto death*, 1 *Joh. 5. 16.* and yet he doth not forbid them to pray for such, as afterwards shall appear.

Concl. 3. It were foolish and ridiculous, bold and presumptuous to (t) pray for reprobates, as such, and under that reduplication. That were, as if we said, *Lord alter thy purpose and decree, and become thou mutable and changeable, like vain man.*

Concl. 3.
(t) *Except according to the limitation so be added afterwards.*

Concl. 4. Yet, though we knew such and such persons to be reprobate, or to have committed that unpardonable sin against the holy Ghost; and to have, out of spite and malice, opposed and set themselves against the known truth of God; we might lawfully pray for them. *We shall speak to these*

Concl. 4.

severally: but first, we will give a general caveat concerning both those cases, that they are rather speculative, then practical, the one doth seldom, the other never occur. We must not expect to meet with a revelation, concerning the reprobation of any man; and as for the sin against the holy Ghost, (u) Beza his caution is very necessary, viz. *That since that sin is hardly known and discerned, we must not be rash in determining of any man, though most wicked and profane, that he hath committed this unpardonable sin, and upon that account to think that we may cast him out of our prayers.*

As to the first case concerning reprobates, it may be asked, whether we be under any command to pray for them? supposing that the decree of reprobation were revealed unto us, and whether or not, in our prayers for others, we should add this proviso, *If they belong to the election of God, and be not reprobates?* *Ans.* In these few particulars; 1. if the decree of reprobation were revealed to us, it would appear, that we were no more obliged to pray for those, whom we knew to be under that irrecoverable sentence, then for such, as we know to be guilty of the blasphemy against the holy Ghost; the Lord doth not call us to work, when he withdraws all ground of encouragement: when we have no promise to look to, it will be hard to spy a command; there is no command to seek Gods face in vain, *Isa. 45. 19.* Its true, the decree of God, though revealed, is not our rule, yet it may warrant me to leave off the performance of several duties, to which, otherwise, I were obliged; as providence (which is the execution of the decree) may cast some out of my prayers, by casting them into hell, so the decree, when known, may be to me a ground to leave out, and forbear to mention some in my prayers, whom, otherwise, I were obliged to remember. 2. As for ordinary (the former case being extraordinary, and *rare vel nunquam contingens*) as we know not what is Gods purpose concerning any man, so we must not look to the decree, and by it limit the object of our prayers, but we must look to the general command to pray for all men, and make it our rule, *Since (x) we know not (as Augustine saith) who doth, or doth not belong to the number*

(u) Quum id peccatum magis inus lateat quam foris se prodatur, nihil aique nobis eorum aliquid hoc unum n: de quoquam temere hac in parte iudicemus. Beza in 1. Joh. 5. 16.

(x) Nescientes quis perveniat ad predestinatorum numerum, quis non perveniat, sic assidue debemus charitatis affectu omnes velimus salvos fieri, Aug. de cor. et grat. cap. 15.

of those who are predestinated unto life, we should be so affected towards all, as that we should desire all to be saved, And thus our desires of their salvation should be absolute, neither need we add that limitation and condition, which some judicious Divines (and particularly the learned Dr. (y) Twisse) do mention, viz. *If it may stand with the decree of God, or if such belong to the number of the Elect, &c.* As we are obliged to love all our neighbours without exception (and all men on earth, as Casuists determine, are such) so to desire and pray for their good and happiness. And albeit the event and success of our prayers depend upon the decree and appointment of God, yet our praying and desiring must not depend upon that condition, but must be regulated by the command, which is general and unlimited, *1 Tim. 2. 1. &c.* What I did not Christ on the crosse pray for his persecutors, without any limitation or discrimination, and weep and lament over Jerusalem? Yea; albeit; 1. he knew their rejection; yea and, 2. as God, he hath appointed and decreed it; which practice of Christ, as man, not to be contrary unto, or unbecoming his absolute and eternal decree, as he was God, that judicious (z) Divine doth evince against the cavils of *Arnold Corvin.*

(y) *An non homini sanctissimo convenis palam proclari se (nisi Deus aliter statueret) recuperare ut ipsi ignoscere de quibus tamen Deus aliter foret constitueris, Twiss. vindic. part. 2. sect. 2. 3. dist. 7. prope finem.*
 (z) *Twiss. loc. cit. pag. 243.*

Yet thirdly, I grant, that we may more confidently pray for others, when that qualification is added, not by way of exclusion; but as a designation of the subject, and by way of encouragement and motive to stir us up to the performance of that duty, and to perform it with the greater confidence of success, then if promiscuously we did pray for all, not knowing, who amongst them were elect, who reprobate; as there are special bonds lying upon us to pray for, and every way to promote the good of the Elect (and yet more especially of them, who already are of the household of faith, *Gal. 6. 10.*) so we may pray for such with the greater confidence and assurance of success, for to such the absolute promises do belong, and shall in due time be performed; and they are given to Christ, and are the object of his prayer, *Joh. 17. 20.* And if Christ joyn with us, we need not fear lest our prayers be rejected. And thus, I would interpret these reverent practi-

cal Divines, who seem to limit their prayers to the Elect, than they make mention of their election, nor as if they would exclude all others, who belong not thereunto, from their prayers, but to testify that special obligation that lyeth upon them to pray for the Elect; albeit it cannot be denied, that we may put up some particular petitions for the Elect; and thus we may well add such a limitation, though we must not alwayes and altogether exclude others who are not of that number.

But, it may be askt whether we may follow that form of words, 1 Tim. 4. 10. and as the Lord there is said to be the Saviour of all men, but especially of those that believe; So we may pray for salvation to all men, adding, that we do seek that especially to believers. *Ans.* 1. Albeit thus we do not formally pray for reprobats, and under that reduplication; yet, this form of prayer seemeth to border too near thereunto, and it hath thus much in it, *Lord, though such be reprobats, I will pray for their salvation*; and thus, as it were, in a compounded sense, we pray for reprobats, and though not as they are reprobats and under that reduplication; yet, although they be reprobats, we say thus, that we do pray for them; were it not better to abstract from the decree, and not mention it at all? 2. That form of words cannot be our pattern; because God is there said to be the Saviour of all men and of believers, *respectu diversorum objectorum*; he is not, *ad idem*, the Saviour of believers and unbelievers; for, the one receiveth only an outward, bodily and temporal protection, the other a spiritual and eternal salvation; while as the question doth suppose, that the object is the same, and that the difference is only as to the maner, measure and degree; for, how can we be said to petition any thing, *rather* and *especially* for some beyond others, unless we petition the same thing both to the one and the other? But, 3. if the object were the same, and no incapacity supposed or included into such a note of preference, I see no inconveniency that can be objected from such a form of prayer: thus when we are praying for temporal and outward benefits to a multitude, we may especially seek these to the elect; thereby intimat-

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ing either the further degree of our affection towards them, and desiring good things to them, or that we desire a greater measure of these things unto them then unto others.

These things being premised, we proceed to shew, that notwithstanding we had a revelation concerning the reprobation of some particular persons; yet, we might lawfully pray for them; albeit that general command to pray for all men did not oblige us: the promise (which is the main motive) being removed, and an infallible intimation being made, that no success can be gotten thereby, it can be no more used as a mean, and we will not find that anywhere it is enjoyed as a meet duty: and it is probable, that the sole ground why that command is relaxed, as to those who have sinned against the holy Ghost, is, *because there (a) remaineth no more sacrifice to be offered for such, but a certain fearfull looking for of judgment*: and therefore, since there is no hope of success in the one case more then in the other, the command seemeth to expire in this as well as in that case: but yet, our obligation may arise from another ground, as our special (yea, perhaps general) relations to such a person, which may, by just consequence, bring us under the bond of another command, warranting the performance of this duty. And thus, when we compare the general relaxation with this special obligation, the result will be this, that when we look to the decree of God, and consider, that our prayers will not prevail, we may forbear to offer up such a vain (as to the good of such a person) oblation; and yet, when we look upon the miserable state of such a person, especially if standing under some near relation to him, we may pity him, and may pour out our complaint in his behalf to the Lord. I am not ignorant, that many do approve that ancient saying of (b) *Augustine*, that if we knew who were reprobates, we should no more pray for them then for the devils and damned in hell: which (c) *Lyra* applieth to those who are guilty of the unpardonable sin against the holy Ghost; but, we hope, before we close, the disparity between those who are yet in the land of the living, and those who are judged and set into their place shall be made manifest. And here we might alledge the authority

(a) Heb. 10.
16, 17.

(b) Si de aliquibus ita certa esset ecclesia ut qui sunt illi etiam nosset qui, licet in hac vita sunt constituti, tamen predestinati sunt in eternum ignem ire cum diabolo, tam pro eis non oraretur quam nec pro ipso, Aug. de civit. Dei lib. 21. cap.

(c) Lyra in 1 Joh. 5. 16.

(d) D. Twiss.
wind. part. 2.
dig. 7. ad 9
23. & in Cor-
vin. def. Ar-
min animad.
pag. 256.

thority of a great Divine, (d) Dr. Twiss, confirmed by two pregnant instances in our blessed Saviour, who prayed that the cup might pass from him; and wept and lamented over *Jerusalem*, saying, *O! that thou hadst known, in what thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace*; and yet, Christ knew that his Father had decreed that he should drink that cup, and that *Jerusalem* should be destroyed.

And I would ask, if the Lord did intimat his decree of reprobation, and that he would never shew mercy to such a man, might not, and ought not such a one, notwithstanding of that revealed decree, pray for mercy, and use the means whereby he might escape the wrath of the Almighty? You will say, it may be questioned if any man were obliged to look upon such a revelation as holding out a peremptory and irrevocable sentence, and not rather as a threatening, implying a proviso and condition, and a virtual promise of mercy upon repentance, since all the promises and threatnings of the word, though as to the letter they appear to be most absolute and peremptory; yet, admit a suteable condition, limitation and exception, *Ezek. 33. 13. 14. 15.* Nay, but standing to the supposition, (the Lord preserve us from such a sad and desperate case) I think it can hardly be denied that such a one should use the means; and who dare blame him if he should say, [Lord, thy decrees and unsearchable counsels are a depth, I dare not bark against the heavens; but, Lord, keep me from sinning against thee, and from blaspheming thy holy Name, Lord give me grace to do my duty, and to submit unto thy holy will; Lord, do thou unto me what thou wilt, but, Lord, keep me from sinning against thee.] And thus he may pray and attend the Ordinances, resist temptations, &c. as if such a sentence were not given out against him.

But, you will perhaps reply, can a reprobate do these things? *Ans.* The question is not what he is able to do, but what is his duty; and albeit that be not the way to fulfill the revealed decree, but rather to escape that sad sentence; yet, such a revelation doth not make that course to become sinful and unlawfull; nor doth it liberat him from any point of duty, to which (as a rational creature, being yet on the

(e) way)

(e) way (he was obliged; though his condition be hopeless, yet he is not removed from the means, nor stated in, and brought to his place; and the decrees of God though made known to us, are not (as hath been shown, Art. 1.) the rule of our duty; especially when they do not import the futurition of sin, but are conversant about the state and final portion of sinners. (e) Quia via. 107.

But it may be enquired, if such a one as he is obliged to use the means, so may look after the end, and pray for life and salvation? *Ans.* Albeit submission be the duty of sufferers, and there be no punishment due to sin, though never so great, albeit the pains and torments of hell, that should cause sinners murmur and blaspheme; yet the decree of God concerning events not being our rule, doth not lay an obligation on us to conform our wayes and desires thereunto; as we may resist temptations to sin, though we with *Peter* had a revelation concerning the futurition of it, so we may use the means to escape a revealed judgment, and pray against that stroke: and what is it to desire and use the means of grace? but upon the matter, and by just interpretation to seek after, wish and desire Salvation, which is the (f) end: and it seemeth to be very unreasonable to imagine that we should labour, endeavour and be diligent in using the means, and that yet we may not desire and pray for a blessing upon them, that they may prove effectually, and be subservient for obtaining the end: *Augustinus* case mentioned, *See* 1. Concerning the wicked son complying with the decree in desiring his Fathers death, and the godly son praying (though with submission) that his Father may recover and using (albeit he had no hope) all lawfull means for that end, may serve for clearing our case; and who will condemn (g) *David* his fasting and praying, that his child might recover, notwithstanding the Prophet *Nathan* had revealed unto him that he should die, which message he might have looked upon as a peremptory sentence, and not as a conditionall threatening. (f) 1 Pet. 1. 9. (g) 1 Sam. 12. 14, 16.

Since then we are obliged to pray for our selves notwithstanding of whatsoever decree, though known to us; why may

may we not also pray for others, whatever be the decree of God concerning their everlasting estate? I grant there is some difference, we being far more necessarily and indispensably bound to our great master and Lord, then to our fellow-servants; there is nothing can be imagined so long as he giveth us leave to work in his vine-yard, and casteth us not out, that can liberat us from that duty we ow to him, the subordination being essentiall, the bond and ty must be indissolvable; but love being the measure, and as it were rule of our duty to men, when we know our labour will be in vain, though we may in testimony of our love appear for them, yet we will hardly find a ground whereupon to build an obligation thereunto; and therefore a revealed decree, though it doth not make our endeavours for the good of our brethren unlawfull, yet it may liberat us of that obligation under which otherwise we did ly; it must alwayes be our duty to pray for our selves, but to pray for others only then when we can look upon our prayers as a *mean* for their good.

You will say, if it be not our duty, then we must supererogat, and walk without rule when we pray for these whom we know to be in a hopelesse condition. *Ans.* Albeit there arise no obligation from the generall command to pray for all, (which is the rule that falleth under the present disquisition) yet there may so much obligation arise from other grounds, as may warrant our practice, and will have the force of a Law to him who is prest to act upon such a motive. Thus our Divines, disputing against the Popish supererogation, do maintain, that what they call evangelical counsels, hath the strength of a law, when some speciall circumstances do concur, in vice, yea and engage him, who absolutely and abstracting from such a state and condition is not obliged so to act; thus saith (b) *Davenant*, to live in perpetull virginity in the generall is the matter of counsell and not of precept, there being no generall command obliging all to continue in that state; yet *Paul*, having the gift of continency &c. found himself obliged by the authority of God to continue in that condition; and as to our case, if we would reflect upon the decree we may forbear to pray for those whom we

know

(h) *Davenant*
determin. 22.
viram ducere
virginalem in
genere res, con-
siliū est non pre-
ceptū, atque sic
videtur ea qua
consilia haud
incommodē di-
cuntur, si ope-
ris speciem con-
sideremus fieri
tamen posse
praecepta ali-
quando si speci-
ales circum-
stantias pen-
sitemus,

know to be cast-awayes, yet if we will abstract from that sentence (which we are not obliged to reflect upon, though it be revealed to us, the Lord not having made it our rule) and would consider them as our brethren, there is no restraint lying upon us, why we may not put up a prayer for them, yea, and by thus abstracting from the decree (which only gives to us a *superseas*) it would appear, that we bring our selves under the obligation of the general precept, *pray for all men*; and although we would suppose that command in the present case, *viz.* of a known decree still to be expired, yet there may, as to some men, arise an obligation from their special relations unto them. Though the Lord did reveal to Parents and Pastors, &c. that their Children and people, &c. were reprobates, yet its hard to affirm, that they might not pray for their salvation; not as if they might pray the Lord to alter his decrees; but abstracting from these, though revealed to them, that they might intreat that the object of that decree might be altered, and that their dear relations might be taken out of a state (not of reprobation, from which we do suppose they do abstract, but out of a state) of sin and misery, and put into a state of grace and happiness; and though some from thence might infer, that they thus prayed the Lord to change his eternal purpose, yet as they should abstract from the antecedent, so from such a consequence and consequent, and absolutely pray for that to our near interests, which in it self, and to them is good and desirable: Thus we should rather play the part of a *Metaphysician*, then *Logician*. And that we may make such a kind of Theological abstraction, seemeth to be certain, from what hath been said, *Art. 1.* And the former consequence is as valid in the case of *Peters* avouching and adhering to his master, as in this case; for *Peters* denial was revealed unto him: yea; the same argument may as well be framed against Christ his praying, that the cup might passe from him, while he knew that it was decreed that he should drink it.

Nay, though a prohibition were added to a revealed decree, yet it would appear from the practice of eminent Saints; that our hands were not bound up; for albeit the

Lord had revealed to *Samuel* his purpose to reject *Saul*, *1 Sam.* 15. 11, 26. adding a prohibition upon the account that he was rejected, not to pray any more for him, *Ch.* 16. 1. yet it would appear, that this restraint was rather a relaxation of the command, and a permission granted to *Samuel* not to pray any more for *Saul* (though his King) then a peremptory prohibition; for albeit *Samuel* came no more to see *Saul* till the day of his death, yet he left not off to mourn, (and who can imagine then that he left off to pray?) for *Saul*, *Ch.* 15. 35. So the Prophet *Jeremiah*, though he knew that the Lord had purposed to cast that people out of his sight, and thereupon had received, as would appear, a peremptory prohibition to pray no more for them, *Ch.* 7. 14, 15, 16. yet forbearth not to pray for them; though the Lord had told him that he would not hear him, though he did cry, *ver.* 16. yet he would cry, until he met with a second prohibition, having the former reason annexed to it, *Ch.* 11. 14. yea, he would not yet cease, so that the command is renewed the third time, *Ch.* 14. 11, 12. and notwithstanding of all these prohibitions, he still prayeth, as it would appear from the rest of that prophesie, that he continued a supplicant for Israel untill the day of his death, the book of the Lamentations clearly shew. Thus also *Moses* continues to pray for a stubborn people, after the Lord had said to him, *Let me alone*, *Exod.* 32. 10. A prohibition seemeth to have more in it then a revealed decree, and yet it did not bind; *Moses*, *Samuel* and *Jeremiah*, would not be driven from the Throne, though by both these cords they were pulled back, and yet I hope none will be so uncharitable, as to think that these holy men did sin in so doing.

Now we come to the second part of the question, concerning the blasphemy against the holy Ghost, which is in great part cleared by what hath been already said. Mr. (i) *Burges* citeth the opinion of some Ancients, who thought that the words, *1 Joh.* 5. 16. did not hold out an absolute prohibition of all to pray for such; though ordinary Christians might not interceed for those hainous transgressors, yet eminent Saints (thought they) might do it; though every one

(i) *Burges*;
on *Joh.* 17.
serm. 41.

in the Court may not interceed for a vile malefactor, yet a special Favorite may interpose: And this special privilege of eminent Christians to interceed for them, for whom others need not appear, seemeth to be intimated, *Jerem. 15. 1. Ezek. 14. 14. Moses and Samuel, Noab, Daniel and Job*, though they would not have prevailed for those there mentioned, yet in that they are there named, their moyen with God is clearly implied; which glosse the learned *Burgefs* doth reject, thinking the prohibition to be general; but we, because we conceive that there is held forth there no peremptory prohibition; and though, *Moses, Samuel, &c.* might prevail more with the Lord then others (which is the thing there intimated) yet we know no petition they were allowed to put up for any, which others might not as well present unto the Lord; all Christians of whatsoever size, having the same rule, and being under the same commands.

Secondly, Others, as *Lyra* think, that though we may not pray for such as have commited that sin, that they may escape eternal punishment, yet we may pray, that in part they would leave off (k) to sin, that thus their eternal punishment may be the lesse: To which, may be added a third conjecture more probable then any of the former two, that we may pray for temporal good things to them, while they are here in the world, though we may not pray for their eternal salvation, and that they may repent.

But the words being general, *not to pray*, they must either hold out a general prohibition, or no prohibition at all, but a relaxation of the general command, and a general permission to all not to pray for such; and if we do more narrowly ponder the words, we will find that they hold out no prohibition; for saith the Apostle in that, *1 Job. 5. 16. there is a sin unto death οὐκ ἐστιν ἰατρῆσι λόγος ἰατρικῆς, I do not say that he shall pray for it.* As if it had been said, ye are lying under a bond, ye are under the necessity of a command to pray for brethren, who have not committed that unpardonable sin; but there is no command lying upon you to pray for such as have thus sinned, neither canst thou expect to be heard, though thou didst pray for such; the Apostle saith

(k) Nicholas de Lyra in 1 Joh. 5. 16. non officio pro eo orandum ut penam eternam evaderet, possibile tamen orandi pro eo ut minus peccaret & per consequens ut minus puniretur in inferno.

not, *ye shall not pray*, the note of negation doth not exclude the performance of that heavenly exercise, but it removes the command; and thus notwithstanding of what is there said, we may out of zeal to the glory of God in the salvation of such a one, and because of some particular relation to him, wish and pray for his salvation, abstracting from the appointment of God, and his peremptory threatening never to shew mercy to such a one: It seemeth to be a cruel and monstrous thing, to lay the hand on the mouth of a parent or child, of a pastour or master of family, and to say they may not wish, desire and pray for the salvation of their several relations, though their condition were never so hopelesse and desperate: How pathetically did *Moses* and *Paul* desire and pray, that Israel might be saved, notwithstanding they knew that Gods decreë did stand in the way, and that many of them (as we may from several grounds collect, and from Christs Sermon, *Mat. 12.* from *25.* and *Ch. 23.* from *13.* &c. necessarily conclude) were guilty of that blasphemy.

Then, 2. It is considerable, upon what ground the Apostle refuseth to presse that command, *pray for the brethren*, in reference to those, who have sinned unto death, *viz.* because his former motive, *ver. 14, 15.* which holds out a promise of successe and audience, hath not place as to them; so that the Apostle doth not simply forbid to pray for such, but saith he, *I do not*, I cannot urge the performance of this duty toward such, upon that ground which may stir you up to pray for others, for whom, if ye ask, God will give; I do not say, you should pray for them, not that ye may not pray for them, but because ye cannot pray for them with confidence and hope of successe, your prayers can do them no good: Thus also the Lord doth liberate *Samuel* from praying for *Saul*, upon the

(1) 1 Sam. 16.

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same account, (1) *How long* (saith the Lord) *wilt thou mourn for him, seeing I have rejected him?* thy mourning is to no purpose, it will not profit him; and pray not (saith the Lord to (m) *Jeremiah*) for that people, for I will not hear thee, all thy tears and prayers will not withhold the determined judgment: so that such apparent prohibitions, are rather peremptory denunciations of judgment against those people.

or

or persons, then a restraint upon the Prophets and servants of God, as to the performance of that duty, to which otherwise they were obliged; and they seem to be almost parallel with, *Jer.* 15. 1. and *Ezek.* 14. 14. where *Moses*, *Samuel*, *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job* are not said to become guilty, if they had been living, and had prayed for that people; but that though they had prayed, yet Gods mind could not be towards that stubborn generation, and that notwithstanding of their prayers, he would have cast them out of his sight: So that the Lord by this form of speech, doth not testifie the dislike of the thing, for if it had displeased him to pray for such, these holy men durst not have offered up any desire to God for them, nor persevered in so doing, as *Samuel* and *Jeremiah* did; but by this relaxation the Lord doth warn his honest supplicants, that their prayers would not be heard in behalf of such wretches; albeit the Lord would accept of his Saints and their prayers, though poured out for cast-aways, yet he would not answer their requests, nor shew mercy to these for whom they did pray; and yet their prayers should not be lost, but should (like *Dauids* fasting for his malicious enemies, *Pf.* 35. 13.) return into their own bosome.

And thus the Lord doth not simply dissuade them to pray, but by an argument taken, *ab iniurii*, which if they would let passe, they might be doing, but they could not blame him, if their labour wanted successe. Nay, such an apparent prohibition, is so far from laying a restraint upon the Saints, that if thereupon they did forbear, they would provoke the Lord, and wrong themselves and others. Thus, *Gen.* 32. 26. the Lord saith to *Jacob*, *let me go*, but he will not till he get the blessing; and if he had yielded, we may suppose, he would not then have gotten the blessing; so, *Exod.* 30. 10. the Lord sayes to *Moses*, *let me alone*: Nay, but replyeth *Moses*, I will stand in the breach, and will not leave off to interceed for that people, though it hath most grievously provoked thee.

You will say, may we not pray against such as have committed that unpardonable sin? Thus the Christians of old prayed against *Julian* the Apostate, if then we may pray for such

such, it must be lawfull to put up contradictory prayers.
Ans. Albeit too many (no doubt) have been guilty of that blasphemy, yet, since that which is the main ingredient of it, viz. malice, rage and hatred of the known truth, is a latent thing, and not obvious to the eye of our discretion, I never read of any since the dayes of the Apostles, whom the Church of Christ durst determine and peremptorily conclude to be guilty of that sin, except (n) *Julian* the Apostat, for whom they left off to pray, and prayed against his malice and rage, that the Lord would prevent that mischief he intended against Christians, and would remove such a stumbling block out of the way of the Gospel; but they did not pray for *Julians* condemnation, nor had they any warrant to pray for that.

(n) Theodor.
 bist. lib. 4. cap.
 9. 17. 19.

Again, you will object and ask, what difference there is between one lying under that peremptory sentence, and him upon whom it is already executed? May we not as well pray for them that are in hell, as for those we know to have sinned unto death? *Ans.* Because we conceive this to be the main objection, we will now speak to it at some length. And, first, if we abstract from a revelation (which cannot now be expected), and speak of those who have grievously backslidden, as we would remember *Beza* his caveat, and beware lest we too rashly judge of any man that he hath committed that unpardonable sin; So this may be warrant enough for us to pray for any man, though never so guilty, and lying under many sad threatnings, that there is no sentence and threatening though never so peremptory, but it admitteth a limitation and proviso, *When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely dy,* (would not this appear to be a most peremptory and irrevocable sentence? and yet, hearken to what followeth) *if he turn from his sin he shall surely live, he shall not die,* Ezek. 33. 14, 16. It is true, 1. these who are guilty of the blasphemy against the holy Ghost, shall never find grace to turn and repent, and lay hold on Christ, and so shall never be pardoned; yet, if they did turn they should find mercy and live. And then, 2. albeit there be no particular sin that is unpardonable, except that blasphemy; yet, the most part of sins and sinners shall never be pardoned, and therefore

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our prayers can do them no good; and thus, unless we limit our prayers to the Elect, and add this condition when we pray for others, if they belong to the election of God, we must pray for them whom our prayers will not profit. Secondly, and especially, we answer, Albeit these who are guilty of that unpardonable sin be under an irrevocable sentence, and though we (as is supposed) know their condition to be desperate; yet, we must carry our selves far otherwayes towards them, then towards those who are in hell: and as upon a civil consideration we owe them, if our Superiors, Magistrates, Parents, Masters, &c. honour and obedience; so also, upon a spiritual account, there be several duties which we may perform towards and with them; while they are *Vizors* and on the way, which we may not perform with or for them, after they are cast into hell; for, so long as they live in this world, they are under the (4) means, (I thought these shall do them no good) their day is not yet come to an end; and though they were excommunicated, and thus in part shut from publick ordinances, they are not as yet actually stated into an unalterable condition; and therefore they may well be an object of prayer, pity and Christian compassion; though the malefactor be sentenced and condemned; yet, we may deal with the King for a pardon. O! but when the sentence is once executed there is no remedy; after the reprobats are cast into hell, and come to their everlasting home; after their day is spent and they removed from the ordinances and means of grace; to what purpose should we pray for them? after the ship is broken, sails, cables and anchors will not profit; if life be gone, no medecine can do any good; when the night hath surpris'd them, so that they can no more work for themselves, we must not imagine that we can help them with our hands.

But, some may yet reply, we cannot in faith pray for such as we know to be reprobats, or to have committed that unpardonable sin; we cannot have the least hope or expectation of success, and dare we pray and not in faith? and such a prayer must be performed as a meer *rask*, and (if I might call that which we grant is not commanded) a *duty*. It cannot

(a) Nunc enim
propterea orat
Ecclesia pro
iis quos in ge-
nere humano
habet inimicos
quia tempus est
penitentiae
fructuosa.
Aug. de civit.
Dei, lib. 22.
cap. 24.

not be a *mean* for good to them, and why may we not then pray for those that are in hell? *Ans.* Certainly, we should not ask what we may not ask in faith: only the *prayer of faith* is an acceptable sacrifice; but the faith that is required in prayer hath not alwayes one and the same object, as shall more fully be shown, Part 2. Ch. 2. And if we know that God will accept of such prayers as a testimony of our love and compassion towards our neighbours, and of our zeal to his glory in their conversion, then we may know our labour shall not be lost: what though they for whom we pray reap no benefit thereby; yet, if our prayers (as *David's* for his enemies) return into our own bosome with a message of peace; we have no cause to complain, as if we had sought the Lord in vain: what God accepteth, as service done to him, that he will reward. But, 3. though in the supposed case we cannot pray confidently, as to the success that will redound to them for whom we pray; yet, even thus we may pray affectionately and compassionately: but those who are in hell are not such an object of Christian-pity and compassion; although we may have some flashes of natural sorrow and pity towards them, and some kind of desire of their delivery and salvation; yet, we may not go to God and offer it up prayer-ways to him; we have no warrant to do so, nor any practice or example of any of the Saints who did so: their day is spent, the door is shut and the sentence executed; they are removed from the means and may not use them themselves, and it were too great boldness in any other to use them for them, and thus bring them under the means whom God hath excluded from them: but, so long as the Lord lengtheneth out the day of life, and forbears the execution of the sentence, the man is not altogether excluded from the means; and why may we not then put up a prayer for him, abstracting from the decree of God, which (though known to us) is not our rule? *after death, the judgment*, Heb. 9. 27. but, till then, thy hands are not bound up: So long as men fall under the object of the command of love, (which doth not expire so long as they are our neighbours and in the land of the living) thou mayest perform this, as well as any other of *fig* of love towards them;

But

(p) *The Popish dream of Falconilla and Trajans deliverance out of hell by the prayers of Thecla and Gregory, is fabulous and ridiculous. As also that of Augustine, (though an eminent Ancient) Neque enim de quibusdam veraciter dicetur, quod non eis remittatur, neque in hoc seculo, neque in futuro (Mat. 12. 32.) nisi essent quibus esset non in isto tamen remitteretur in futuro, Aug. de civit. Dei lib. 21. cap. 24.*

But, that we may put a close to this enquiry; (which though it be rather speculative then practical, as to the proposed case, which seldom or never occur; yet, may be very usefull for clearing what is to be said in the following Conclusion, which concerneth our daily and ordinary practice) we will, 1. in a word, resume those instances which may be a foundation to the present resolution, which at the first view may seem somewhat strange to those who have not hitherto pondered the case. 2. We will offer two or three distinctions for removing difficulties and objections.

For the first, let us seriously ponder and consider Christ his prayer, that the cup might passe from him; *David* his prayer for his child, after the Prophet had told him that he should die; *Samuels* prayer for *Saul*, notwithstanding he knew the Lord had rejected him; *Jeremiah*, his prayer for *Israel*, albeit the Lord had once and again forbidden him to pray for them; *Paul*, his prayer for his brethren and kinsmen, notwithstanding he knew they were rejected and reprobate, and that many of them (as not improbably may be supposed) were guilty of that unpardonable sin. And then let us compare *Pauls* (g) with *Moses* his desire and prayer, which were not only concerning things impossible and contrary to the known purpose of God; but also concerning, 1. the worst of evils. 2. To themselves, (which are two considerable circumstances for clearing the present case) viz. to be (r) accursed from Christ, and (s) blasted out of Gods book: if it be lawfull to wish evil, shall it not be lawfull to wish what is good? and if we may wish evil to our selves, (which seemeth more hard then to wish it to others) may we not wish good things to our neighbours? if we may desire (whatever be the nature of that desire, whether absolute or conditional) our own damnation, (t) contrary unto the known decree of God, may we not far rather desire and pray for the salvation of others? Here is much more then parity of reason, and we may well argue from the greater to

(g) An *impossible wish* conceived by the Apostle, to witness, i. his charity towards his brethren; and ii. his zeal of Gods glory, to be illustrated in the salvation of a whole Nation, *Diod. on Rom.* 9. 3.

(r) *Rom. 9. 3.*
(s) *Exod. 32. 32.*

(t) *Atqui hoc esse norat impossibile & Dei proposito adversum; ideo votum nec ideo frustra, quia etsi norat fieri non posse, tamen sic vehementer affectus sui testam fecit - Sic & Moyses votum accipi debet, D. Porcius in Rom. 9. du b. 1.*

(o) Absit ut
 docentiamus:
 neque enim te-
 mere hoc vo-
 tum effusivi;
 sed deliberato
 consilio scrip-
 sit distante
 Spiritu Sancto.
 At enim se
 non mentiri
 sed veritatem
 dicere in Chri-
 sto attestante
 sibi conscien-
 tia sua in Sp. S.
 D. Pat. ibid.

the lesser, none (I think) will be so rash as to (a) condemn that high of zeal in those eminent Saints; neither should any man be offended while we plead for such holy, innocent, submissive, silent, conditional and affectionate desires of the salvation of our neighbours, whatever be their guiltiness, or God's eternal purpose towards them.

As to the second, let us view these instances; and perpend what kind of desires and prayers they hold forth, that we make these our copy; especially the prayer of Christ, *Moses* and *Paul*, as coming nearest to our case: and from these, we may collect these three qualifications of such prayers as we now plead for. 1. In Christ his prayer, *Mat. 26. 39.* we may observe his submission to the good pleasure and appointment of God; for, saith he, *nevertheless* (or, albeit the thing absolutely considered be good and desirable, yet) *not as I will, but as thou wilt.* 2. Christ prayed conditionally, for the removal of that cup, *viz. if it were possible*, that is, if it might stand with the good pleasure of God concerning the salvation of lost man. 3. From *Moses* his prayer, *Exod. 32. 32.* and by comparing *Paul* his wish, *Rom. 9. 3.* with his prayer, *Rom. 10. 1.* we may collect that such prayers are rather *wishes* then formal *petitions*, rather conditional *wouldings* (that I may so speak) and *velleities*, then absolute *desires*; and thereby these holy men rather express what they *would* (x) *pray* for, if possibly it could be granted, then what they *did absolutely pray* for: and such prayers do contain a submissive and silent compassionating of these misers, but not a preptory request or murmuring complaint of God's justice and severity against them. Such prayers then, as we now plead for, must be, 1. submissive. 2. Conditional: And, 3. by way of wishing and woulding, *viz. if the thing were not impossible*; and that, 1. in (y) testimony of our zeal to the glory of God in the conversion and salvation of these objects, (abstracting from God's decree which is not our rule.) 2. In testimony of our affection, sympathy and tenderness towards our brethren and neighbours.

Only let us add a caution concerning these three qualifications, that the two first have especially place when we abstract from the decree, though known, and the third and last while

(x) οὐχό-
 μιν, οπεριον,
 may well be
 rendered, I
 would wish,
 viz. if it were
 possible, vnde
 lectio num.
 accipi possit,
 (sicut Bala-
 mon in Job)
 οὐχότιν αὖ
 συντιναρε,
 pro operum s.
 fieri posset.

(y) Tanti erat
 apud illum Dei
 gloria & cha-
 ritas in suos,
 &c. Beza in
 Rom. 9. 3.

while we reflect on the decree, and thus, as it were, formally, and in *sensu composito*, pray for the reprobate. And hence the difference is manifest between such prayers and the prayers put up for others, for whom we may ask more confidently and peremptorily, and without those limitations and proviso's.

You will say, but why should we love them whom the Lord hateth? *Ans.* Ask at Paul, Jeremiah, Samuel and others, and what will serve for their vindication, may be a sufficient plea for us. *My hearts desire* (saith Paul, Rom. 10. 1.) *and prayer to God for Israel, is that they might be saved,* and yet the main scope of that, as also of the preceeding and following Chapter, is to shew the reprobation and rejection of that people, and to vindicate Gods sovereignty, justice, holiness, and the immutability of his purpose. And for a more direct answer, 2. we say, that the command to love our neighbours doth not expire, so long as they are our neighbours and in the land of the living; only, let us love them in the Lord, though they hate him, and be hated of him, yet we may love them in, and for him, if our motives be spiritual, such as respect to his command and zeal to his glory, we need not fear least he challenge us for loving them he had rejected.

Let us hear what the learned judicious and Mr. (2) Calvin saith for removing this objection, and for clearing the whole question. *We need not* (saith he) *fear least we love our neighbours too much, so long as we love them in the Lord; it is a grosse error to think, that Christians should become*

(2) Ferociores isti affectus ut precipitanter sentiantur, ita nihil aliud inveniuntur aut:

considerant quam id quo tendunt, itaque non conjungebat electionem Dei cum voto suo Paulus; sed præterita ejus memoria, totus in Judæorum salutem intentus erat. quod si ergo in Deo, non extra Deum diligamus, nunquam eris nimis zoster amor. Calvin in Rom. 9. 3. porro quod tantopere Paulum cruciavit Judæorum exitium, quod Deo volente atque ita disponente accidisse noverat? hinc docemur non impedire obedientiam quam Dei providentia deferimus, quin ad perditionem hominum ruinam ingemiscamus, cui tamen sciamus iusta Dei judicio destinatos: potest enim idem animus duplicem hunc affectum recipere; ut quum in Deum respicit, libenter perire sustinet quos perdere ille decrevit, quum ad homines cogitationem reflexit, eorum malis condoleat, longe ergo saltemus qui a Deo detrahunt, et avertuntur in hominibus pietas requirunt, ne Dei ordinationi repugnent. Calu. ibid in yer. 2. videmus igitur Christianam fidem non inducere aversionem vel Stoicismum D. Parvus in Rom. 9. 2.

Stoicks, and cast away all bowels of tenderneſſe, for fear leſt they ſhould repugn and oppoſe the decree and appointment of God, for our obedience we ow to God, and ſubmiſſion to his purpoſe and providence, doth not binder us to mourn and lament the ruine and miſery of the reprobate, whom we know in the juſt judgement of God to be appointed to deſtruction; for theſe two affections may well conſiſt, When we look to God in ſilence to ſubmit to their juſt puniſhment, and When we look on men to bewaile their caſe and deplorable condition.

Concl. 5. If we abſtract from theſe extraordinary caſes, (viz. of a revealed decree concerning the reprobation of ſome particular perſons, and the certain knowledge that this or that perſon, hath committed the unpardonable ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt) we may univerſally affirm that we are obliged to pray for all men, though never ſo wicked and proſane, according to the exhortation, 1 *Timoth. 2. 1.* I know there are not a few judicious Divines who think that the Apoſtle here doth not exhort to pray univerſally for all and every one, *pro ſingulis generum*, but for all indefinitely, for men of all ranks and degrees *pro generibus ſingulorum*; not for every individuall man, but for every rank of men, for rich poor, noble, ignoble, Jew, Gentile, &c. and they add this limitation, becauſe Arminians from that place compared with v. 6. do draw an argument for univerſal redemption. But we may not now meddle with that controverſie, nor need we for clearing theſe words, which abſolutely conſidered ſpeak of no ſuch matter: and we think that any who will impartially look upon them will think that Mr. Calvin had reaſon to ſay, that the Apoſtle in theſe words (a) commands that prayers be made for all mankind, and the reaſons alledged in the preceeding concluſions do more ſtrongly and forcibly conclude and prove this.

But before we now argue and propound ſome ſpecial grounds for confirming this point, let us view two ſubtile diſtinctions of two reverend Divines viz. Dr. Ames and Volf. *Musculus*, for the, 1. Dr. (b) Ames, having aſſerted that we ſhould pray for ſome things to all and every one who is in the

(a) *Jubet orationes, non pro fidelibus modo concipi, ſed pro univerſo genere humano — jubet preceſſus complecti omnes mortales.* Calvin. 1. *Timoth. 2. 1.*
(b) *Ames caſ. Conſc. lib. 4. cap. 20.*

the lahd of the living, because the goodnesse of God extendeth to all men, 1 *Timoth.* 4. 10. when he cometh to speake of salvation and happinesse, he propoundeth a distinction denying that we may pray, that all and every one *collectively* should be saved, because (saith he) we know from the Scriptures that all shall not be saved, and yet (saith he) we may pray for every one severally, *pro singulis speciatim*; because in charity we are obliged to hope the best of every particular man.

There be severall reasons we might bring against this distinction, and, 1. I would ask, if all collectively doth include any one person beside every one severally? hence we might argue thus, if we may not pray for all collectively, there must be some one or more for whom we may not pray severally: But that is contrary to his concession in the other branch of the distinction; what guiltiness can there be imagined in praying joyntly for all those, for whom we pray severally?

2. This distinction supposeth the decree of God to be our rule; contrary to what hath been said, *Sett.* 1. and the Authors own (c) hypotheses. And if it were our rule we might not pray for every one severally, but onely for the elect.

(c) Medul.
lib. cap. 7. Bel.
enerv. Tom.
4. lib. 2. cap. 2.
contra Grevin-
ch. de predef-
tin. cap. 5. &c.

3. As, 1. our charity and hoping well of men, (which he maketh the ground of the last part of this distinction) must no more be our rule, then the decree of God; (for we must pray not only for them of whom we hope well, but to whom we are obliged to wish and desire good things; whether we have any ground of hope (as to them) or not) So, 2. our charity will be too large, if we extend it to every one without exception; we may not indeed passe a sentence concerning the final state of any man, though never so wicked; yet there be too many of whom we have no ground to hope well. And 3, if we might hope well of every one, why not of all? if of this and that Pagan, and profane man, why not of all? 4. We will find the Apostles wish grace unto, and pray for whole Churches and incorporations, though they did not think that all and every one amongst these multitudes should be saved, yea though they had ground to fear the worst of many of them, as we may see, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3, 4. and 5. 1. and 6. 8. and 11. 21, 30. *Gal.* 3. 1. &c.

But

For whom we should pray

But (d) *Muscus* his distinction is more subtle, while he affirmeth that we may not (as Christ would not, *Joh. 17. 9.*) pray for the world, though we should pray for all mortals and for all and every one in the world. We will not exagitate these terms, and enquire what the world (as to the present case can import beside all men and women in the world? or all mortals, (as he speaketh) neither will we exaggerate what is brought by that reverend Divine by way of (e) explication; but the meaning (as I conjecture) is this, that we may speak of the reprobate world either (f) *formally* as such, and as it is hated and rejected of God, and under that consideration and reduplication they are neither an object of our love nor prayers; or we may speak of the reprobate (g) *materially*, that is of these who are wicked, abstracting from the decree of reprobation, and looking on them as men of one common stock, and having the same nature with us, as they are our brethren, neighbours &c. and thus we are obliged to love and pray for all men: and this distinction being thus understood, (and I know no other sense that can be given to it) agreeth (as to the first member) with what we said *Concl. 2.* and as to the Second branch, with this present conclusion.

(e) *Nec Christus pro mundo*
i. e. filiis *lucis*
seculi *oravit;* *nec Apostolus*
petit ut pro *mundo* *oremus:*
aliud est simpliciter *pro*
omnibus hominibus—*aliud*
promundo *orare,* *sicut aliud*
est omnes mortales *diligere*
& aliud diligere *mundum;*
nos ignoramus
quidam illi sint *&c.*

(f) *Which be* *expressed by*
the world

(g) *And thus* *be* *called* *them*
all men in the *world* *or* *all*
mortals.

(h) *Calvin in*
1 Tim. 2. 1.

(i) *Quot erant*
eo tempore *magistratus* *ut*
erant ecclesie *hostes;* *& re-*
nes Romanos

inimici erant summa rerum—Jubet autem Paulus nominatim illos in precibus comprehendere: sed quid si tunc Julianus Apostata imperasset? nempe hic unus erat eorum numero pro quibus precandum non erat. Beza in 1 Timoth. 2. 2.

Apoſtat had then been Emperor? And anſwereth, that this one man would then have been excepted. That monſter of men, Nero, and his wicked counſellors and paraſites muſt be prayed for, and only ſuch as have committed the unpardonable ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt (of whom we ſpake, Concl. 4.) may be excluded from our prayers.

Hence, 2. From this confeſſion we would argue, if we muſt pray for all Magiſtrates, and thus for all individuals of one rank? why not alſo for all of every other rank, and thus univerſally for all mankind? Whatſoever ground can be pretended for not praying for all individuals of other ranks and degrees of men, haath as well here place (and therefore ſince they are not concludent in this, neither are they in any other caſe) for as we cannot think that all the world will be ſaved, ſo neither that all Magiſtrates will be ſaved; *not many wiſe men, not many mighty, not many noble are choſen*, 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. they are expoſed to greater temptations then others: and it is no ſmall mercy to have the feet kept from burning while we *(k)* walk upon hot coals, &c. But *Beza* confeſſeth, and the text it ſelf, *in terminis*, ſaith, that we ſhould pray *(k)* for *all in authority*; and, 1. It were ridiculous here to run to the diſtinction of ranks and perſons, becauſe here the rank is ſpecified, and all in it named; 2. This is not only aſſerted, but proven, and a reaſon that extendeth to all Magiſtrates annexed, *viz.* that under them, we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godlineſs and honeſty. *Ergo.*

3. We muſt pray for all, to whom the Lord peradventure will ſhew mercy; but (for ought we know) the Lord may ſhew mercy, and give repentance unto the moſt vile and wicked men on earth; unto a *Manaſſeh*, unto a *Paul*, &c. unto bloody and cruel perſecutors, unto theſe that are in the ſnare of the devil, and are taken captive by him at his will, 1 *Timoth.* 2. 25, 26.

You will ſay, we know the Lord will not ſhew mercy to all men; only a few are choſen and ſhall be ſaved, *Mat.* 20. 16. *Luk.* 13. 23, 24. &c. *Anſ.* 1. We know from the Word of God, that the number of the Elect is ſmall, and that few ſhall be ſaved comparatively, and in reſpect of them who ſhall eternally

eternally perish. 2. By experience, and judging by the rules and characters held forth in the Scriptures, we may know, that few in every age have been saved. Yet, 3. We know not (whatever may be our fears) that the Lord will not shew mercy to this present generation, that now the Lord will not fulfill that promise (*Pf. 2. 8.*) to give to Christ the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession, that now in thir last dayes, the Lord will not accomplish that word, *Isa. 2. 2. 3. Micah. 4. 1, 2.* and establish the mountain of his house in the top of the mountains, and exalt it above the hills, and make all nations flow unto it ; who knoweth when that word, *Isa. 41. 9.* shall be made good ? *The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the Sea, &c.* If all nations may embrace and professe the Gospel (and many Divines from several propheties of the Scripture labour to prove, that thus it shall be, and none can deny that it may be) then I would ask why we may not pray for this blessing unto them ? that all the earth may hear the joyfull sound, and welcome the glad tidings of salvation ; and *that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will, 2 Tim. 2. 24, 25, 26.* and from that Text, we may further argue thus, That which we should propose as our end in teaching, exhorting, &c. may be a fit object of our petitions ; but the recovery of sinners is the end of the ministry, of exhortation, doctrine, &c. and therefore we may and ought pray, that our Ministry may have this blessed effect. The distinction of *finis operis*, and *finis operantis*, hath not place here ; for the *work* and *worker*, must here have one and the same end ; whatever be the high and holy design of the first and sovereign agent.

(1) 2 Cor.
11. 18.

You will say, we are not Apostles, upon Whom the (1) care of all the Churches and of all mankind should lye. *Ans.* 1. What the Apostles might pray for, that every Minister, yea, every member of Christ may pray for : albeit all have not a ministerial care, yet all should have a fraternal and brotherly care for all and every one ; 2. A Minister (as some judicious Divines of late (specially Mr.

(m) *Hudson*)

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(m) *Hudson* have asserted and maintained against Independents) by vertue of Christs institution, and by his ordination to the office of the Ministry, is made a Minister of, and receiveth that office habitually, and *in actu primo*, in relation to the whole visible Church, so that he may, and ought exercise that function in relation to any part, as the good of the whole doth require, and as he hath a particular and orderly call: So that his fixing to this or that particular congregation (albeit it eye him to a constant and ordinary exercise of his office amongst that people, yet it) doth not limit the office it self, which by his potestative mission, according to Christs institution, he hath received in relation to the Catholick Church *indefinitly* and *universally*. And thus he may exercise not only his gifts, but also his pastoral office, and preach the Gospel in any place *indefinitly*, whereever he meeteth with a call; and should *universally* pray for all, to whatsoever particular place he be fixed, as to the exercise of the more speciall parts of his Ministry: And albeit prayer be a common and general duty lying upon the people as well as the Pastors, yet it is a pastoral duty, and that not the least, and as a Minister of Christ, he prayeth not only for his particular flock, but also for the whole Church. But, 3. The ground alledged by those, who differ from us in this particular, doth as well militat against a Pastor's praying for his own congregation (if there be any ignorant or scandalous persons there) as against his praying for all members of the visible Church; yea, and for all mortals: for, who is the man that hath ground to hope that all his flock shall be saved?

But it is replied by (n) some Divines, Though God be (s) kind to the evil and unthankfull, and (p) maketh his Sun to rise on good and bad, and thus we may pray for common mercies to all; yet God will not bestow special and spiritual mercies to all: and therefore we may not pray for their conversion and salvation. *Ans.* 1. The decree of God, his purpose either to give or not to give, is not (as hath been shown) our rule. 2. That Conscience must be too scrupulous (to say no more, because of that reverence we owe to them with whom we have now to do) which dare not wish

(m) Mr. Hudson, vind. of the off. and unity, &c. ch. 6. sect. 5. pag. 137. &c. O! if that point were more seriously pondered by the Ministers of Christ, how that thus in some respect, and by vertue of their office the care of all the Churches lieth upon them; how affectionately would they desire? and with what fervency would they pray for their welfare, to whom they could not preach? &c.

(n) Dr. Ames loc. cit. Mr. Gee treat of prayer, pag. 109.

(o) Luk. 6. 35.

(p) Mat. 5. 45.

(q) *Ex parte boni quid amico optamus omnes dominus aequè diligimus ex eboritate, quia omnibus optamus bonum idem in genere sc. beatitudinem eternam, Thom. 2. 2. quæst. 26. art. 6. ad. 1.*
 (r) *Prov. 25. 22.*

(s) *Proximus aliquo modo est omnis homo, cui aliqua ratione, possumus commodare, Amel. Cap. confc. lib. 5. cap. 7. bene extendi debet ad omnem proximum, i. e. ad omnem hominem, Cicero. De officiis. lib. 2. min. 39. vid. Thom. 2. 2. quæst. 25. 26.*
 (t) *Nam si ab uno homine quem Deus finxit omnes sumus oriundi certe consanguinitas sumus — summum inter se hominum vinculum est humanitas, quod qui diruperit is nefarius & parricida existit audus. — Quod si ab uno Deo inspirati omnes & animati sumus, quid aliud quam fratres sumus? Sec. Reusn. symb. Imper. part. 2. symb. 12. Othonis 1. Amicitia non angustis finibus terminanda est; omnes enim quibus amor & dilectio debetur, amplectitur — pervenit autem uque ad inimicos pro quibus etiam orare precipimur; ita nemo est in genere humano cui non dilectio, etsi non promissa caritate, pro ipsa tamen communis natura societas debeat, August. ad Prob. epist. 221. cap. 8. At pariter ut gnati sis nos debemus amicis si quod sit vitium non fastidire, Horat. 1. Sermon. 3.*

and desire, which dare not pray and say, [Lord, let all the world taste of thy goodness, let them glorifie thy name, and obtain (q) salvation through Christ; let all the earth be filled with the saving knowledge of God, let them kiss the Son that they perish not in his anger, let them turn from their evil wayes and follow that which is good, &c.] 3. It may be questioned, whether to pray for common mercies for those, for whom we may not pray for grace to use them aright, be not to pray for a snare to them; since common mercies to graceless souls are but as so many (r) coals of fire heaped upon their head, to aggravate their guiltiness and increase their misery. 4. These whom we are obliged to acknowledge for our neighbours, yea, and brethren, them we should love, and by all means procure their good, especially their spiritual and eternal good, in which the glory of God is so nearly concerned; and therefore, since prayer is a principal mean which we may use for the good of all whom we can no other wise profit, we must not leave that mean un-essay'd: but all men on earth are (s) neighbours, and every one according to his ability, and as opportunity doth offer, should perform the duties that flow from such a relation, *Luk 10. 27. 33. 36. &c.* All men are brethren and of one blood, *Act. 17. 26. Mal. 2. 10. Gen. 19. 7.* Ah! should we love our neighbours as our selves? and may we not pray for them when we pray for our selves? and shall Conscience and Religion be pretended as a Plea for (t) brethren not to interpose with the provoked Father for his favour? and that there may be a reconciliation, that he would reclaim and shew mercy unto those prodigals, who have nothing but husks to feed upon? Hence,

We may further argue thus, if we should love our brethren and neighbours, (and all men are such) then we should wish and desire their good both temporal and eternal; and from whom can we desire it but from him who only can kill and make alive, who only can save and destroy, and who sheweth mercy on whom he will? And what is it to desire the Lord to do them good, but to pray for their good; prayer being nothing else but an offering up of our desires to God, *ἡσὺ δὲ* (saith the (u) Philosopher) τὸ φιλεῖν, τὸ βυλεσθαι τινι εἰς ἄγαθόν, *ἀγαθὰ* ἐκείνου *ἐπιμα*, to love is to desire those things that are good to any man, not for any benefit may thereby redound to us, but that they may profit him: and canst thou say, that thou lovest thy brethren, while thou dost not desire their good, while thou dost not desire it from God who only can give? What? though they did hate and persecute thee, yet thou must love them: albeit not (as *Augustine* speaketh) for that mutual love they bear to thee, yet for their partaking of the same nature with thee, and because of the authority of God, who hath commanded thee to love thy neighbour as thy self. Let *Jeremiahs* practice be thy copy; though they recompence evil for good, though they dig a pit for thy soul; yet, do not thou leave off to stand before the Lord to speak good for them, *Jer.* 18. 20. remember Christs prayer, *Luk.* 23. 34. and *Stephens*, *Act.* 7. 60. Albeit as to the measure and degree of love there may be some variety; yet, in respect of the object, we must (as (x) *Aquinas* saith) love all men alike; and wish to all the same good things. Am I my (y) brothers keeper? were the words of a wretched *Cain*; [although we had no command, yet, nature bids us (saith Dr. (z) *Paraus*) keep and procure our own and other mens salvation.]

We might here make use of (a) *Augustine* his argument, whereby he proveth, that the devils did not love Christ, If (saith he) they had loved him, they would not have said to him, what (b) have we to do with thee? and if, according to the (c) royal Law, we loved our neighbours as our selves, would we say, what are we concerned in our neighbours salvation? and why should we mention them in our prayers?

(u) *Arist.* 2.
Rhetor. cap. 4.

(x) *Thom.*
loc. cit. scil. 2.
2. *quest.* 26.

art. 6. ad 1.
(y) *Gen.* 4. 9.

(z) *Quam-*
sumus non
accederet ex-
pressum custo-

dia manda-
sum, namra
omnes jubet
mutuo esse
custodes ac
defensores sa-
lutaris nostrae
alienae.

D. Paraus
in loc.

(a) *Si autem*
diligentes
non dicere
quid nobis
tibi? August.
ad Sixt. Rom.
Presb. epist.
109.

(b) *Luk.* 4.
34.

(c) *Jam.* 1. 8.

5. If once we begin to limit this Assertion, we will not be able to rid our feet, and assign the bounds where we must stand. You will say, we may pray for all ranks of men. *Repl.* But the question is, for whom in these ranks, and why for such, and not for others? You will say, we may pray for all the Elect. *Repl.* But I would know, 1. by what rule we can judge who are Elect, who not? 2. where they learned that limitation, and where did they read in the Word, that Gods decree is our rule? And, 3. if Pastors, Parents, Subjects, &c. should not pray for their relations, unlesse they belong to the election of God? 4. Where do we find such a limitation added in the prayers of the Saints, *If (such and such men be among the number of the Elect?* I would ask, whether such a limitation would not beget a jealousy in the hearers, and would not rather irritate those for whom we thus prayed (if they were present or heard of it) then do them good?

Yea, 6. If this limitation must be added while we pray, for some, then it must be added when we pray for any, though never so eminent, as to their carriage and profession; for, I think none will presume to tell us, who are Elect, who not. You will yet say, its enough we know not that they are reprobates. *Ans.* 1. Thus they come up the length of this present conclusion, and lead us to an extraordinary case, *viz.* of a revealed decree, to which we have already spoken. And then, 2. Who dare say, that he is assured of the reprobation of any man? If again it be replied, that we must not pray for the incorrigible enemies of Christ. *Ans.* 1. But how shall we know who are incorrigible, who not? If the (d) Apostles did exhort to submit unto, and pray for vile *Nero*, and these cruel and malicious persecutors, who then did bear the sword, who are these enemies for whom we should not pray? who can be judged to be more incorrigible then they? And then, 2. Are not all the reprobate incorrigible? and therefore, if upon this account, we may not pray for enemies, neither must we pray for any reprobate. But, 3. We would here remember the caution mentioned, *Concl.* 2. concerning reprobation, *viz.* That as we should not pray for reprobates as such, so neither for Christs incorrigible enemies formally as such, and standing

(d) 1 Tim.

1. 1, 2.

1 Pet. 2. 13.

14, 15, 17.

Prayer is the best tribute we can give to our Kings and Rulers.

standing under such a consideration (which upon the mater, and as to the present case, is one and the same with that of reprobation) but abstracting from the decree (which is antecedent) and the event (that is subsequent, *viz.* their continuing in their wicked courses) we must absolutely ask, that which is good in it self, and good for them, and which would make for the glory of Gods pardoning mercy, and the encrease of Christs kingdom.

But if it be askt, whether we pray for such as enemies of Christ, though not as incorrigible? *Ans.* If the particle *As*, do import the formal reason and ground wherefore we pray for such, we deny that we pray for such as enemies to Christ, but rather as men, brethren, neighbours, &c. and because of the command of God, and that God by their conversion may be glorified, &c. But if the particle *As*, doth only signify the object of consideration, upon which we must reflect in our prayers, then we must pray for them as such; we must consider their wickedness, malice, &c. else how could we pray that it should be pardoned? that they may repent of it and turn from it, and thus we may be said to pray for Papists, Jews, Turks, &c. as such: not that they should continue, and that God would bless them in those courses, but that he would give them grace to forsake and abandon their sinful wayes and courses.

Obj. 1. Will the holy Spirit of God dictate a prayer for a reprobate? will he stir us up to pray for them he hath rejected? *Ans.* The Spirit teacheth us to pray as we ought, and for what we ought, *Rom.* 8. 26. and therefore for what we are commanded and obliged to pray; and thus dictateth alwayes such prayers as will be acceptable to God, albeit he will not grant the particular that is askt. And such prayers shall not be successlesse, as to us, however it fare with those for whom we pray. And thus we may retort the argument, and ask whether the holy Spirit who is our leader and guid, who will teach us to pray as we ought, will not help us to pray for all them for whom we are commanded to pray? The command of God is the rule of our duty, and the Spirit will help us to conform thereto; but the success and event of duty, is

not its rule, neither the decree concerning that; and therefore as we should not, neither will the Spirit teach us to look on that as our copy, but will help us to pray according to Gods Word and commands, not according to his decree and work. Would the Lord make that our duty, to the performance whereof, he would not give his help and assistance? and if it be our sin not to pray for such, will not the Spirit help us to pray for them?

Obj. 2.

Obj. 2. What Christ would not do, neither should we; but Christ would not pray for the reprobate world, *Job. 17.*

9. *Ans.* Christ is our copy and pattern, but not in all things he did; all Christs actions were not of the same kind, some of them being imitable by us, and done for our instruction and example, but there were other actions of Christ that were peculiar; and though in them he aimed at our good, yet he purposed not to set them up as a directory to us, as being rather for our admiration then imitation. Christ sometimes

(e) *Rom. 15. 8.* acted as a (e) *minister* of the circumcision, and as a preacher of righteousness, both by his doctrine and example; and thus he weepeth for his desperate and incorrigible enemies, *Luk. 19. 41.* and prayeth for them, *Luk. 23. 34.* At other times, he acted as God manifested in the flesh, and in a transcendent maner, not agreeable to any meer creature; and thus he pardoned sin, and preached as one having authority of himself; and in those actions we would distinguish between their nature and way of performance: thus to preach and pardon sin, is not peculiar to Christ, his messengers may do the same, but not after that maner, they *ministerially*, but he *authoritatively*. And thus prayer was common to him and us, but there were some specialities in his prayers, which we must not imitate; and to go no further then the Text in the objection, let us, 1. look on the motives whereby he presseth his petition, *ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 18, 19, 22, 23, &c.* 2. on the mater, *ver. 15, 21, 23, 24, 26.* Why should we then make this 9. *ver.* our pattern and copy, rather then the rest of that prayer? Christ did pour out this prayer, not as man nor as our pattern, but as (f) *Mediator*, and as our head and redeemer, and therefore he would only pray for his ransomed ones, and that

(f) *Speciales
ha preces ad
Apostolos so-
lum pertinent,
alias pro ami-
cis, pro inimi-
cis, pro hosti-
bus aliisque
omnibus ora-
vis filius Dei
Aretius in
loc.*

that upon the account of election, donation, redemption, sanctification, &c. which are peculiar to the Elect.

Obj. 3. We cannot ask in Christs name what he hath not purchased by his death: But by his death, he did not purchase mercy and salvation to any but to the Elect. *Ergo. Ans.* As in our prayers, we must not look on the decree of God as a rule, so neither on Christs purpose and intention; its certain, and granted on all hands, 1. that Christs sufferings of themselves, were a sufficient price for all the mercies we can ask for our selves or others; 2. that we cannot know for whom in particular he purchased life and happiness. And therefore we must pray for none, if we must only pray for such, as we know he intended to save; yea, nor for our selves, 1. before conversion; nor, 2. in the night of desertion, when we stand most in need of prayer; and, 3. Thus all the reprobate are exempted from this duty, and it must not be their sin that they do not pray. Hence we may distinguish the proposition thus, we cannot ask in Christs name, that for which he hath not laid down a (g) sufficient price; yet, we may ask what he never intended to give, nor by his Spirit to apply to such and such persons: because we are not sent to his secret purpose to be the copy of our prayers, but to the promises; the object of which, is every thing that is good, either to our selves or others. And all the promises, are yea and amen in Christ, and are accomplished through his blood. If then we ask nothing, but what is held forth in the promise, and expect an answer only through Christ, we may be said to ask in his name, albeit we know not what is his secret purpose, as to the person for whom we pray. Which may be yet further confirmed by the Saints prayers for outward things, which they ask in Christs name, albeit they know not whether or not he intended to purchase and procure to them the possession of such and such particulars as they ask, since they know not whether they shall enjoy them or not.

(g) Here the distinction (so much softened in the schools) between the sufficiency and efficacy of Christs death, will not (as I conceive) be denied to have place.

2. To the assumption, that Christ by his death did not purchase grace and salvation, which are the things petitioned; it is denied. That he did not purchase these for the reprobate, to whom they are petitioned; it may be distinguished thus,

(h) *Sed quia de nullo certa est (viz. Ecclesia) orat pro omnibus— nec tamen pro omnibus exauditur* Augult de civit. dei lib. 21. cap. 24.

thus, he did not truly and in effect purchase those mercies to them for whom we pray, supposing they are reprobats, it may be granted: that we (*b*) know he did not purchase and will not give to them what we ask for them, is denied. It is not known to us not only in *particular* what individuall man or woman are elect or reprobats, but also in the generall as to the present and following generation, (whatever may be said of times past whose wickednesse and impiety is not our and known) for, who can bind up Gods hand that he may not shew mercy to all the world? and shall we alledge an unknown decree, purpose and intention, (which though it were known; must not be acknowledged for a rule and law) for a ground and plea why we should forsake the known commandment *to pray for all men*? And that we might pray for cast-awayes though their reprobation (and why not also though Christs purpose and intention not to shed his blood for them) were known, hath been shown, *Concl. 4.*

3. It is not faith in the *Object*, but in the *Subject*; not in him (*i*) Jam. 5. 15. *for whom*, but in him *who* doth pray, that is required in the (*i*) *prayer of faith*, and that it may be offered up in Christs name as shall appear, Part. 2. *Ch. 2.* From this generall we may draw several particulars, the most matteriall shall be named in the following Conclusions.

Concl. 6.

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Concl. 6. We should pray for our enemies. 1. *David* did so, *Psa. 35. 13.* and Stephen *Act. 7. 60.* Yea and our blessed Lord Jesus, *Luk. 23. 34.* And, 2. commands us to do so *Mat. 5. 44.* And, 3. maketh the conscientious performance thereof an evidence of our son-ship; And, 4. of our conformity with our Father which is in heaven, *v. 45.* And, 5. of discrimination between us and Publicans, *v. 46. 6.* This is the best mean to reclaime enemies and to make them friends with God and with us, (and that is the most noble (*k*) victory over enemies in which the true Christian will more rejoyce and triumph (though one were only thus gained) then in the destruction of a multitude) However, 7. thus he doth his duty, and shall be no loser; his prayer shall not be as (*l*) water spile on the ground, but shall return with a message of peace to himself; *Psa. 35. 13.* And, 8. in so doing he heapeth coals of fire (though

(k) *Quo quifque est major magis est placabilis ira* Ovid. 3. *trist.*
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(l) 2 Sam. 14. 14.

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(though he intend not their hurt) upon the head of incorrigible enemies. *Rom.* 12. 20. And, 9. it is no small evidence of sincerity, and may be a ground of comfort to thee O Saint, if while enemies are injuring and persecuting thee, thou canst with the Prophet say, *O Lord, remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath, while they were digging a pit for my soul.* *Jer.* 18. 20. And as this is a notable mean of our peace with God, and with our own consciences; So it is, 10. an evidence and a sure ground of confidence that our prayers for our selves are heard, and our iniquities pardoned, *Mat.* 6. 14. *Mark.* 11. 25. and, 11. thereby also we prevail against, and most valiantly (m) triumph over that devil of malice and revenge, which maketh the Lord himself become our enemy, and to back the lashes of men with a stroak from heaven, because we tak upon us to sit on his Throne who hath said, *vengeance is mine, I will repay.* *Deut.* 35. 35. *Heb.* 10. 30. *Rom.* 12. 19.

O! then pray for your enemies, and ye shall have God to be your friend; and shall thus obey that evangelicall command, *give place to wrath,* *Rom.* 12. 19. *Psa.* 37. 8. *Prov.* 20. 3. O! blesse them that persecut you, *Rom.* 12. 14. and thus thou mayest get a blessing both to thy self and them. But ah! although this duty doth make us resemble God who is kind unto the unthankfull and to the evil, *Luk.* 6. 35. albeit it hath so much of heaven in it, so much humility, self denyall and tenderneffe, though it be such a notable mean of our comfort, peace and acceptance with God, and may prove a mean of so much good to others, yet how few make conscience thereof, and are carefull to perform it? but if thou goest mourning all the day long for want of comfort, enlargement of affections, divine manifestations, and acceptance in thy addresses to God, enquire after the cause: and perhaps thou wilt find, that if thou wert compassionate towards thy enemies, God would be more kind to thee, and manifest himself more familiarly: the Lord deals with many as if he were an enemy, because they live in malice and enmity with their brethren; and their prayers meet not with that acceptance they desire, because they do not desire the

(m) *Bis vin* 11
qui se vincit.
Publian. apud
Reuln. clas.
1. Sym. 50.

(n) *Qui tollis*
litem fas huic
est. Iusta pro-
cari. Reuln.
clas. 3. Sym.
16.

(o) *Qui litem
quærit exco-
munionem in be-
nedictionem
mutat, symb.
Henrici, &
Nigri.*

For whom we should pray.

good of others; God seemeth to slight their (o) prayers, that they may learn no more to hate or slight their brethren in their prayers, *Mat. 6. 15. Mar. 11. 26.*

Concl. 7. Albeit we should thus pray for all men, though strangers, yea though enemies and persecuters, yet there are speciall bonds and tyes lying upon us to pray for those to whom we have speciall relations; and the mo and greater, and the more neer and engaging the relation is, our obligation to the performance of this duty is the greater we may not speak to particulars, these being so many, this duty so clear, and uncontroverted, Scripture-instances so obvious, and the advantage both to our selves and them so certain and great.

And, 1. in the generall, who is so ignorant as not to know, that it is his duty to pray for the Church of Christ, and that his Kingdom may come; that the borders thereof may be enlarged, that the heathen may be given to him for an inheritance, and the uttermost ends of the earth for a possession? *Mat. 6. 10. Psa. 2. 8.* that the whole earth may be filled with the knowledge of God, *Isa. 11. 8.* that the Gospel may have a free and effectuell passage, *2 Thes. 3. 2.* that all Israel might be saved; that *Sem* may be perswaded to dwell in the tents of *Japhet*, *Rom. 11. 26. Gen. 9. 27.* that the fullnesse of the Gentiles were brought in, and that those who yet sit in darknesse and in the shadow of death may be enlightened, *Rom. 11. 25. Luk. 1. 79.* that God in his good pleasure would do good to *Zion*, and build up the walls of *Jerusalem*, that peace may be within Her walls and prosperity within her Palaces, and that God would redeem *Israel* out of all his troubles, *Psa. 51. 18. Psa. 122. 7. Psa. 25. 22.*

2. Who knoweth not that we should pray for Kings and Rulers? that God would blesse them, and make them a blessing to his people, that he would instruct our Magistrates, and teach our Senators wisdom; that judgment may run down as a river, and righteousness as a mighty stream; that thus they may prove nursing Fathers both to the Church and Kingdom; being an encouragement to them that do well, and a terror to such (and only to such) as do evil, that under them

them we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 1 *Timoth.* 2. 2. *Rom.* 13. 3. *Isa.* 49. 23. *Psa.* 105 22. *Amos.* 5. 2. Prayer is the best tribute ye can pay to them, and the best (p) office ye can perform to your neighbors and fellow-subjects; whatever be the judgment of the world, or its reward, yet the best Christians will be found to be the best subjects, and the best neighbors. *Sed bonus vir Cajus Scius, tantum malus quod Christianus.*

(p) *Vid. August. contr. lictor. Petician lib. 2. cap. 23. 86, 92. & in Even. Joan trah. 2.*

3. Who will ask, whether he should pray for the Kingdom city and place of his abode and nativity? 1. Because of severall relations we stand under towards our countrey-men, as being fellow-subjects, compatriots, brethren, (being neerer in kin to many of them then to strangers) and companions, we are obliged in a speciall manner to pray for them. *Psa.* 122. 8. *Rom.* 9. 2, 3. Secondly, because our peace and welfare consists in theirs. *Jer.* 29. 7. And, 3. thus we should not only pray for temporals to them, but also for grace and spiritual mercies; we cannot live securely where the fear of God is not, least, like the fish in the sea, the greater devour and make a prey of the lesser, *Gen.* 20. 11. O! then pray for them, if (q) thou wouldst not have them make a (q) prey of thee. Did (r) *Abraham* so importunately interceed for (r) *Sodom*, though he was not concerned in their misery? and wilt not thou plead for the place of thy habitation, with whom thou must share in their prosperity or adversity? Its the Saints privileged that they may be a blessing in the midst of the land, *Isa.* 19. 24. and bear up the pillars of a sinking sinfull world; *Psa.* 75. 3. were there not a Saint on earth, how quickly might the earth and all its inhabitants be dissolved? Behold the difference between the upright and the wicked! the one is a blessing, and the other a curse to the place, *Prov.* 11. 11. and prayer is that messenger the Saints employ to fetch home the blessing to themselves and others.

4. This duty in a speciall maner lieth on them who live together in one family, as being yet more neerly concerned in the good or evil of one another. Its true this duty doth in a speciall manner lie upon the master of the Family, who

No 2 must

(1) Josh. 24.
35.

must with good (1) *Joshua* undertake for himself and all within his house : He must be a *King* to rule there , a *Prophet* to reach and instruct them, and a *Priest* to offer up daily sacrifices with them, and for them ; none are exempted from this duty, *David*, though a King on whom the care of the whole nation did ly, yet did not forget his family, after he had been employed in the publike worship of God, it is said of him to his commendation, that *he returned to blesse his household*, 2 Sam. 6. 20. If *Cornelius* be a devout man, his religion must not be confined within his own breast, and therefore its observed, that *he feared God with all his house, and prayed to God allway*. Act. 10. 2. But albeit this duty, especially (as to the performance of it with the whole family, as being their mouth and minister) doth ly upon the master of the house, yet none in the family are exempted from a private and personal communion with God in prayer ; what though the head of the house neglect his duty , and were a gracelesse man , wilt thou go to hell because thy Father and master doth run thither ? Ah ! rather with holy *David* lament and say, *Who is me that I sojourn in Meslech, and dwell in the tents* (2) *of Kedar*, Psa. 120. 5. and thou shouldst the rather be busie thy self, if the rest of the family be negligent, that thou mayest get thy name out of the curse that is denounced against prayerlesse families. *Ier.* 10. 25. and what knowest thou but thy prayers may procure a blessing to the whole family ? (u) *Labans* house and estate was blessed for *Jacobs* sake, and (x) *Potiphars* house, yea and all (y) *Egypt* for *Ioseph*. And then if others make conscience of their duty , what a shame is it for thee to be singular in evil ? and that thou alone shalt be pluckt out of the family and cast into hell. Ah ! be no longer a devil to tempt the Saints by thy wicked example. Thou wicked son or servant what wilt thou say ? and with what horror and confusion wilt thou behold thy Father and master in Glory, whilst thou art cast out ? Oh ! (said dying (z) Mr. Bolton to his children) *I Verily beleeeve that none of you dar think to meet me at the great Tribunal of Christ in an unregenerate state.*

(c) Not that *David* ever was in those countreyes, but he called those so , amongst whom he was, by reason of their fierce Barbarousnesse and wickednesse, *Diodati* on the place.
(u) Gen. 30.
30.
(x) Gen. 39. 5.
(y) Gen. 41.
(z) Sam. Clerk, in his life.

Yet. 5, this duty doth ly more forcibly upon those who are of the *Houſhold of (a) faith*, though the members of that family be far ſcattered through many nations, yet they are more firmly united then thoſe of any other incorporation; we have ſeven ligaments and bonds of union held forth in one Scripture, *Eph. 4. 4, 5, 6.* which are brought as ſo many motives to keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace, *v. 3.* and may ſerve as ſo many arguments to ſtir us up to make conſcience of this duty, to pray one for another. 1. All the Saints are members of *One Body*; 2. All are animated by *One* and the ſame *Spirit*; 3. All are called in *one hope*, and are joynt heirs of the ſame Crown and Kingdom; 4. They all ſerve the ſame Lord and maſter; 5. All have one and the ſame *Faith* and profeſſion, one taſk and work, all are walking in the ſame way, and travelling to the ſame home, and all muſt lodge together unto all eternity; 6. *One Baptiſme*, all have the ſame badge, and wear the ſame livery; 7. All have *one God and Father* in Chriſt Jeſus, all are of a noble deſcent, and of the blood Royall (as to their regeneration and new birth) Is there then any relation like to that which is amongſt the Saints? Is there any union which is ſo intimat and ſtrong? and yet alas, in this jangling and contending age, *ſelf-love*, as a canker conſumeth and eateth out true love to the brethren; now are the dayes foretold by our Lord Jeſus, in which *the love of many ſhould wax cold*, *Mat. 24 12.* where there is not true love, there cannot be a cordiall deſire of their good, and no prayer for them that God will accept; O but its a ſad character thou art no ſon, who doſt not mind thy brethren; and if thou haſt no Sympathy with the reſt of the members while they ſuffer, and ſeckeſt not after a remedy, its a token thou art a rotten and dead member, which muſt be cut off; O I but Chriſt the head continually prayeth for all the members of his body, and wilt thou not joyn with him? hell and the world are enraged againſt them, they have but few friends, and ſhall theſe prove unfaithfull, and not help them by their prayers, whom otherwiſe they cannot profit? wilt thou prove like *Pharaoh's butler*? whiſt thou art advanced and haſt moyen at court, wilt thou forget the affliction of *Joſeph*?

(b) *Sicuti in aliis charitatis officiis ita in precibus prima debet eſſe cura ſanctorum.*
Calvin. in Eph. 6. 18.

(b) Gen. 41. 9. if hitherto thou hast done so, say with (b) him, *I do remember my fault this day.* Albeit no Saint should be excluded from our prayers, yet more specially we should remember the afflicted, whoever be forgotten, the sick child will be cared for: affliction is a fit season for prayer, and not only the afflicted should pray for himself, but others should joyn and put up a prayer for him, *I am.* 5. 13, 14. But yet more especially we should compassionat persecuted Saints, who suffer for righteousness sake; though *Moses, Nehemiah, Esther,* and *Daniel* might have enjoyed the pleasures which a Kings Court could furnish, yet the affliction of Gods people did afflict their spirits, and send them to the throne to interceed for their brethren.

You will perhaps say, who is he that forgetteth the Saints? *Ans.* But it may be thou prayest not for them as Saints, but as thy friends, and neer relations; if thou pray for any one as a Saint, thou (c) must pray for *all* (d) Saints, self-love as it may make thee pray for thy self, so also for thy relations, amongst which may be many Saints; but only the love of God can make the love his children as such, and all that bear his image, though never so mean and despicable in the eyes of the world, and not able to serve or profit thee. O! let us hearken to the invitation, *Jsa.* 45. 11. Let us ask of God concerning his sons, the Lord calleth us, and assur-eth us of successe; only let us take heed that we forget none of his sons, the father will not take it well that any of his children should be slighted; as *Joseph* would not speak to his brethren till all were present, so thou mayest meet with many frowns from the Almighty, if thou come alone, or forget any of thy brethren behind thee.

6. (And we shall instance no mo particulars) The relation that is between Pastors and people do engage to the mutuall performance of this duty; as for the Ministers of the Gospel, as they are by their calling obliged, so they will make conscience (if of any thing) to pray that the word preached by them may be accompanied with power for the conversion of the hearers, that it may be received with meeknesse, and reverence, not as the word of man, but as the word of the living

(c) *Tō ſi du-
to includit ſe
ſupponit, 7 d
αὐτῶν πάντες,
quod enim ali-
cui convenis qua-
ſi necellario
convenis omni;
ideoque a qua-
tenus ad omne
vales confe-
quentia, vid
Arist. 1. Poſt.
cap. 4.*

(d) *Eph.* 6. 18.

living God, which is able to make wise the simple; and to save their souls, that they may not become unfruitfull hearers, but doers, that their fruit may be holiness, and the end everlasting life, that they may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. *1am. 1. 21, 25. Rom. 6. 22. Psa. 19. 7. 2. Pet. 3. 18. &c.*

You will not deny that Ministers should pray for the people committed to their charge, for whose souls they must answer in the day of accounts, that they have laboured to feed them, and rescue them from the snare of the devil, and have watched for them, and sought their good in every ordinance. *Heb. 13. 17. 2 Timoth. 2. 24, 25, 26.* But that the people should pray for their Pastor, we do not (too many will say) see such reason or necessity, nor is it very usuall. *Answ.* What dost thou talk of reason or necessity? when may we argue from these if not in the present case? and therefore hearken O negligent hearers! (who care not for your own souls, but would cast all the care of them over upon the Minister, to whom you deny your assistance in that work) and ponder these few (amongst many) motives, that may prevail with you to make more conscience of this so much slighted though most necessary duty. 1. Thou canst not prepare thy heart to hear the word (and no wonder then though thou get no good by it) if thou neglect this duty; if the husband-man take pains on the ground, he will not be wanting (so far as his care and industry can reach) to provide good seed; and if thou desire and expect a blessing on the word, which is the seed of immortall life, as thou wilt labor to have thy heart (which is the ground) fitted and enlarged to receive, so thou wilt by prayer wrestle with the Lord, who is the great master and (e) husband-man, that he would enable his messengers, that they may speak as the oracles of God, in power and demonstration of the Spirit, that a door of utterance may be opened unto them, for to make known the mystery of the Gospel, that they may speak boldly, and may exhort and rebuke with all authoritie, and may be instant in season and out of season, with all long suffering and patience, that they preach not themselves but Christ, that they may take heed

(f) Pet 2. 2.

heed to their Ministry, to fullfill it, that they may be clothed with righteousness, being an example to the flock, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, purity, self-deniall, and holiness; that thus they may save themselves, and those that hear them. &c. 1 Pet. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 2. 4. Col. 4. 3, 17, 2 Tim. 2. 15. Tit. 2. 15. 2 Tim. 4. 2. 2 Cor. 4. 5. Psa. 132. 9. 1 Tim. 4. 12. &c. if thou desire *the (f) sincere milk of the word, that thou may grow thereby*, thou wilt not forget the nurse; if thou regard what seed be sown in the ground thou wilt not neglect to go to him who only can fill the hand of the sower, and to say to him, O! let us not have tares in stead of good seed; if thou care for thy spirituall life, thou wilt say, O! let the stewards hands be full, let him have an allowance for us, that we starve not for want of the childrens bread.

2. What are Ministers, weak, frail men, subject to like passions as others are, Jam. 5. 17. Act. 14. 15. and who is sufficient for such an high and weightie charge? 2 Cor. 2. 16. and therefore as they have need to watch over their own hearts, to take heed to ther steps, and to be frequent and fervent in their addresses to God; so the people should *wrestle together with them in their prayers to God for them*; Rom. 15. 30. and thereby strengthen their hands against all the discouragements and difficulties they may encounter with: and thus the meanest labourer in the Paroch, may joyn in the work, and give his help and assistance; and the most able and zealous Minister stands in need of the prayers of the meanest Christian; such as have the greatest measure of holiness knowledge, &c. may have their stock yet increased; and daylie stand in need of grace, and of a new supply of strength, and actuall assistance for improving their talents for the honour of God, and the salvation of the flock, Eph. 6. 19.

3. Otherwise, you must either idolize them or your selves, and sacrifice either to the sower, or to the ground, as if from either, or both, the increase did come; if the blessing were expected from God, it would be askt from him, and that the instrument might be enabled for doing his work acceptably and successfully; if all be nothing, 1 Cor. 3. 7. God

is all : and the increase must be expected and sought from him, he hath not put that in the hands of any creature. v. 6. and should we not ask and wait upon him alone for it ?

4. Ministers are in greater hazard then others ; and shall their people ly by and give them no help ? the devil and the world are mad and enraged at a godly and faithfull ministry, *Behold I send you forth as Lambs amongst wolves*, saith our blessed Lord to his disciples, *Luk. 10. 3.* which in part hath had its accomplishment in all who have succeeded them in the Ministry: *predicare nihil aliud est, quam derivare in se furorem mundi* ; To be a Preacher is nothing else (said *Luther*) but to draw the worlds fury and malice upon himself : And as to his own case, he (g) writeth thus, *Luthernus foris à toto mundo, intus à diabolo patitur, & omnibus angelis ejus* ; that he was pursued from without by the world, and from within by the devil and all his angels : Contempt, scorn, oppression, violence, &c. are all the reward that can be expected from a wicked world, which hateth the light because their works are evil : But we (if faithfull) shall have better entertainment in the world to come ; and though now by men we be (as our betters were) (h) accounted the filth of the world and the off-scourings of all things, yet we are precious in the eyes of our master, we are (what shall I say) his Jewels ; yea, it is written (and canst thou read it, and not admire ?) we are the (i) *glory of Christ*. But it were well, if we had not greater and worse enemies then the world, who only can vex a frail decaying body ; Sathan, the (k) *Prince of this world*, and all the wit and might of hell is engaged in that quarrel : If *Joshua* appear before the Lord to interceed for the people, Sathan will stand at his right hand to resist him, *Zech. 3. 2.* (l) *Principalities and powers* do stand in battel-array against us, and shall we have no help from our friends ? Many be the temptations and snares that are laid for poor Ministers, and shall their people look on as nothing concerned in the mater ? not knowing that at the breach made in the Pastors, Sathan purposeth to enter in, and Spoil and make a prey of the flock : He knoweth that their fall will occasion the stumbling of many, and be a great dis-

(g) *Mr. S. Clearkin*, 10 life.

(h) 1 Cor. 4. 13.

(i) 1 Cor. 8. 23.

(k) Joh. 12. 31.

(l) Eph 6. 12.

eredit to the holy profession, and therefore he draweth out all his forces against them, giving these a charge (not unlike to that which the King of Syria gave to his Captains, in reference to the King of Israel, 1 Kings 22. 31.) to fight neither with small nor great, save only (in a comparative sense) with the Ministers. Ministers are (*m*) leaders, (*n*) shepherds (*o*) ambassadors, (*p*) watch-men, &c. What is our Christian life but a (*q*) war fare? we are called out to fight the Lords battel against hell, the flesh and the world, and to wrestle with (*r*) principalities and powers, against the rulers of darkness and wicked (*s*) spirits; now if in this contest the leaders fall, or the watch-men be corrupted, Sathan is sure to carry the day; if the shepherds be turned out of the way, must not the sheep go a stray? if ambassadors deal deceitfully and comply with the enemy, much hurt and mischief may thereby redound to the whole state and incorporation; thus you see how nearly ye are concerned in your Ministers tryals, temptations and perils; and will you not remember him in your prayers; and though he run all that hazard for your sake, will you do nothing for his help and assistance?

5. If we ponder the several steps, and (as it were) parts of the ministry, we will find, that prayer hath a hand in them all, and may be instrumental in the procuring, and for the right administration of them. 1. It hath a hand in the sending forth and planting of Ministers where there is no labourer, *Mat.* 9. 38. 2. Prayer may be instrumental for the continuing of Ministers, their staying and abiding with their flock, and their deliverance from the fury and rage of persecutors, and from all their troubles and temptations, 2 *Cor.* 1. 10, 11. *Act.* 12. 5. 3. That their ministry may be successfull, and that a door of utterance may be opened unto them, that they may make known the mystery of the Gospel, and may preach in the power and demonstration of the Spirit, *Eph.* 6. 19. *Col.* 4. 3, 4. 4. Neither the care and diligence of the husband-man, nor the goodness of the seed, can make the stony ground become fruitfull and yield encrease; though the Pastors mouth be opened, yet the people may be (*t*) strained in their own bowels, their hearts may be lockt and receive nothing

(m) *Ila.* 9. 13,
16. *Mat.*
15. 14.
(n) *Ila.* 56.
10. 11.
Ezek. 34. 2.
(o) 2 *Cor.* 5.
20. *Eph.* 6.
20.
(p) *Ila.* 56.
10 *Jer.* 6. 17.
(q) 2 *Cor.*
10. 3, 4.
(r) *Eph.* 6.
11, 12.
(s) *πνευμα-
τικὰ τῆς πο-
ρνείας*, i. e.
(inquit) *Beza*
in loc) *πνευ-
ματὰ πορνείας*
*sceleratos spi-
ritus*.

(t) 2 *Cor.* 6.
11, 12.

nothing; and prayer is the best key to open a shut, and the best hammer to break a hard heart, *Ps.* 119. 18, 27, 32, 33, 34. &c.

Thus you see your duty and danger. O then I as you love your own souls, make conscience to pray for your Ministers; pray that they may be faithfull, and may stand in the hour of temptation, that they may be zealous for their master, and may diligently discharge their trust, that they become not proud because of their parts, that they become not carelesse, secure, carnal, and worldly-minded; we will not be ashamed to beg the help of your prayers; and to confess our own weakness and frailty; *Paul*, though an eminent Apostle and valiant champion (you may take a view of his gifts, graces, revelations, pains, sufferings, &c. *1 Cor.* 15. 10. *2 Cor.* 12) yet was sensible of the need he stood in of the prayers of the Saints; and how pathetically did he obtest the Churches to which he wrote, that they would not forget him in their prayers? *Rom.* 15. 30. *Eph.* 6. 19. *Phil.* 1. 19. *Col.* 4. 3. *1 Thess.* 5. 25. *2 Thess.* 3. 1. And we again and again, *Beseech you brethren* (as he did the Romans) *for the Lord Jesus Christs sake, and for the love of the spirit, that ye strive together with your pastors in your prayers to God for them, that their ministry and message may meet with acceptance and successe amongst you.* But if ye will neglect the nurse; the blood of the child will be upon your heads.

Ye will (no doubt) be ready to complain, that the Minister speaketh not home to your condition, that you hear the Word, but are little better of all you hear, the Word preached is unsavory, and O! will some (who think they are some body) say, If I were living under a more searching and powerful ministry. Thus many will be ready to cry out against Christs messengers and ordinances, and plead conscience for their complaint, when they can find no other thing to object; either against the man or his ministry: The Lord pity poor frail men, who notwithstanding they gladly spend, and are ready to be spent for their people, yet (with him, *2 Cor.* 12. 15.) have reason to complain, that the more abundantly they love their flock, the less they are beloved; all the reward

they meet with from the most part of hearers, is a load of reproach and contempt. So that, if we durst be silent, if there were not a necessity lying upon us to preach (and we unto us, if we preach not the Gospel of Christ, 1 Cor. 9. 16.) if we looked for no other return, but what we meet with from man, we would deservedly be the most contemptible men upon earth: And while parents are deliberating how to dispose of their children, they had reason to say, what many carnall men do say, such a son is for this calling and employment, and such for another, but this naughty underling child is fit for nothing, but to be a minister: as if the worst and basest of men, were good and fit enough for that, which is the most high, eminent and excellent employment (pardon me to say so from the Word of God, whatever the world do think or say) if such as reason thus, be not amongst the number of those *curst deceivers*, Mal. 1. 14. *who having a male in their flock, do vow and sacrifice to the Lord a corrupt thing, let their own conscience judge and give out sentence.*

(u) I hope none will judge that I am particularly aiming at this people to whom I have a special relation, and that I am preaching my own case; though I had reason, (and I wish none had greater) I would not go to the pulpit, far less to the presse with any such challenge and complaint.

O! But they have (you will say) a considerable pension and stipend. *Ans.* But no thanks to thee, who art ready to hold back from them what is their own, which God hath allowed them, King and Parliament, and the laws of the kingdom, hath secured unto them; thou, who wouldst live upon their maintenance, and delight in their ruin, if thou were permitted to enjoy what belongeth to them, thou art not the man to whom they are obliged for their allowance: and though all be not so carnal and selfish, yet if Ministers were to live on the benevolence of the people, they might often rake a sleep for their supper. But O! What a poor base thing is it for an ingenuous spirit, to undergo such a burden of pains, care, grief, ingratitude, reproach and disrespect, for such a mean maintenance? though I deny not there may be some, and too many mercenary Ministers, yet where is the man of parts, resolution and candor, who might not be as well provided another way? and who would not rather chuse a mean maintenance in any other condition, then to endure the affronts and reproaches, that accompany the calling of the (u) ministry?

But

For whom We should pray.

But to return to those complainers of the ministry, I would ask, 1. If ever to this day, they have seriously reflected upon, and complained of the hardness and naughtiness of their own hearts? if they had been thus busie at home, perhaps they had not brought their complaints so far off; 2. I would ask whether thou, who art so ready to complain of the Minister, hast been as carefull to pray for him? thou thinkest thou sees his infirmities and weakness, but didst thou ever pray the Lord to strengthen and enable him? thou art ready many wayes to discourage and weaken his hands, but when, and wherein hast thou encouraged and assisted him? As no Sermon can have life and influence upon a dead careless people, so their deadness may exceedingly indispose the Minister, and provoke the Lord in part to stop his mouth: A dead people may occasion and procure a cold and lifeless Sermon. Who knows what a discouragment it is to preach (as he, *1/a. 6. 18.* and *53. 1.*) to stony hearts, to heavy ears, to shut eyes, and for a Minister to consider, that he runs in vain, and few or none believeth or regardeth his report? and with this discouragment the Lord often joyneth his stroke, and in judgement straitneth his messengers, and thus withholdeth a reasonable word from despisers.

If people did care for their souls, they would not commit the whole work to another: ye will not so intrust any worldly business to whatsoever factor or agent, but ye will be doing, waiting on, and some one way or other giving your help; and yet he, who watcheth for the good of your souls shall have none of your aid and assistance, not one tear or prayer; and must such be accounted Christians? Oh! remember he is but a weak sinfull man, called out to encounter with many and strong enemies, many discouragements, difficulties, tryals and temptations; and the work is great, and far above his strength: his shoulders are too weak for bearing such a heavy burden. O then! put in your necks under the yoke, and lend a lift. Your joynt prayers may bring help from heaven, *vis unita fortior*. Solitariness, as it is uncomfortable, so it is unsuccessfull. If the work be great, it needeth the moe hands. Ye may help your Minister to preach, and
you

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you may hinder : see what ye will answer to God if you ly by ; what ? can ye not pray ? and if ye would , ye should have less cause to complain : Ye will seek a blessing on your work and meal , and will ye not minde the work of the Ministry, and that which should be meat to your souls ?

But, to pass from this particular to the general, how should we bewail the neglect of this necessary , sweet and evangelical duty ? Thou who hast the communion of the Saints standing as an article in thy *Creed*, wilt thou keep no communion with them , and allow them no room in thy prayers ? Thou who acknowledgest that prayer which Christ did dictate to his disciples , to be a perfect pattern, darst thou pray for thy self and not for others ? Thou who callest God *Father*, wilt thou forget thy *brethren* and the rest of his *children* ? Thou who complainest that (x) *all seek their own things*, wilt thou seek for thy self and not for others ? Thou who professest that thou shouldst love thy neighbour as thy self, how darst thou desire and ask any good thing for thy self, and not also intreat for the same to thy neighbour ? Thou who regravest, that in this sinning age, *the love of many waxeth cold*, why dost thou not pray more frequently and fervently ? Prayer would eat out malice out of thy heart, and out of thy brothers heart ; if we would pray more for one another , we would contend less : who dare hate him whom he knoweth to desire and pray for his good ? and the Lord would draw his heart unto thee, if thou didst more zealously lift up thy heart in prayer for him ; this fire, kept alive upon the Altar, would consume and root out the seeds of discord, contention and jealousy. Thou who professest great zeal to the glory of God , in the salvation of sinners, dost thou do not desire and pray for their salvation ? Thou who professest thy self a (y) debtor to all men, to strangers, yea to enemies when, and how wilt thou pay this debt , if not while thou hast the key in thy hand to open thy Fathers treasure ? And what wilt thou give unto those , or do for them, who will not ask from another any thing unto them ? Thou canst not say thou hast not moyen, or thou art afraid, lest thou shouldst displease the King , if you put in for so many : for, he

he himself inviteth, yea, and commandeth thee, and complaineth of the selfishness and narrowness of thy heart; and he takes it very kindly when thou hast a publick spirit in prayer: when was it that *Daniel* obtained that *Testimonial* from heaven, that he was *greatly beloved*? was it not while he was praying for the people of God? *Dan. 9. 20, 21, 22, 23.* And as for the prevalency of thy request, if they be the children of God, then, saith the Lord, ye may command what ye will for those, *Isa. 43. 11.* and though they be a stubborn generation, yea, though they were persecuting Pagans, thou mayest obtain something for them: How oft did *Moses* hold off a visible stroke from the rebellious Israelites, and reverse the plagues that were inflicted upon *Egypt*? So often as he did pray, so often he prevailed; and when the prayers of the Saints do not prevail for removing an outward judgment, nothing can help, such are in a hopeless and helpless condition: if *Moses* and *Samuel*, *Noah*, *Daniel*, or *Job*, will not be heard, the case must be desperate *Jer. 15. 1. Ezek. 14. 14.* but what knowest thou, O man! but such a miserable wretch may belong to the election of God, and that thy prayer may be instrumental for drawing him out of the snare? And what matter of comfort should it be to thee, if thereby thou didst gain a soul to Christ? and if, while thou appearest before the tribunal of Christ, it be said to thee, these are the men and women for whom ye did mourn and pray; *they that turn many to righteousness shall then shine as the stars for ever and ever, Dan. 12. 3.*

Oh parents! look on your children, wives on your husbands, neighbour on neighbour, and behold that which may stir thy bowels. Ah! hast thou no compassion towards thy relations? Alas! it may be thou dost not pity thine own soul, and no wonder then though thou prove not kind to others, who art so cruel to thy self: but, if thou knewest the terrors of the Almighty, and then considered the wofull condition of such wretches, how couldst thou forbear? how pathetically did the Prophet *Jeremy* lament, when he did lay to heart the outward calamity that was to come upon the people of *Israel*? *My (z) bowels* (saith he) *my bowels I I am (z) Jer. 4. 19.*
pained

pained at my very heart, my heart maketh a noise in me, I cannot hold my peace: And shall not the eternal and (unless the Lord in mercy reclaim such) inevitable ruine of your brethren and neighbours, of the once beloved Nation of the Jews, of so many flourishing Kingdoms, of Turks and blind Pagans, stir up the bowels of your compassion, and send you to the throne of Grace, to pour out a prayer in their behalf? and though ye could forget strangers and such as live at a distance, yet, it is unnatural cruelty to deal thus with your friends and relations, not to pity their deplorable condition, nor to awaken those ye see sleeping securely within the sea-mark of Gods displeasure; if you would cry mightily to God, who knows but the echo of your supplications, might alarm them, and (being conveyed by the arm of the Almighty) rouse them up out of their brutish security? But, alas! not a few are more ready to revile their brethren, and to cry out against their faults, by way of insultation, then to pity and pray for them: but, though a Christian rebuke, and loving admonition may be necessary, yet, thus to revile and reproach is a ready way rather to exasperate then to reclaim them. O! but an affectionat fervent prayer to him who hath the hearts of all men in his hand, may be very instrumental to melt a hard heart, and to turn it to the Lord, and do not say, they are past remedy whom the Lord hath not as yet cast into hell; do not bury them in the grave of oblivion, whom the Lord continues in the land of the living: what though they have lyen long in a dead Lethargy, yet the Lord may revive them, and breath the spirit of life and grace into them, and make such dry (a) bones live. What though thou hast prayed once and again for such a rebellious son, such a wicked neighbour, do not faint nor give over, though the vision (b) tarry, wait for it. Holy Monica continued instant in prayer for her son *Augustine*, though she saw no success, nor any change wrought in him; but there was a compensation made for that delay, and at length, *Augustine* not only believeth, but becometh a shining light in the Church. While *Paul* did persecute, *Stephen* prays for him, and God answered that prayer. Christ, while he was on the cross, prayed

(a) Ezek. 37.
39, 40. 10, 11.

(b) Hab. 2, 3.

prayed for his malicious murdering enemies, and in return to that prayer, at one sermon preach't by *Peter*, some thousands were converted. Do not then say, it were lost labour to pray for such, and to what purpose should we pray for these, who will not pray for themselves? nay, but thou shouldst the rather pity such misers, who will not pity themselves: If thou sawest a mad man not spare his own flesh, wouldst thou look on and withhold thy help? wouldst thou say he is mad, and why should I hold his hands? nay, but thou wouldst the rather pity him, because of his mad cruelty against himself: Ah! What are desperate sinners, but so many (c) *besetted fools* and mad men, who are dayly offering violence to their own souls? and what knowest thou but thy prayers may bind them? Ah! therefore should every Saint (with *Samuel* concerning a stubborn and wicked generation) say, *God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you*, 1 Sam. 12. 23. and couldst thou be a witness of the dishonour they do to God, the scandal they give to the godly, and the mischief they do to themselves, and not warn and rebuke them? if thou didst not, thou shouldst partake of their sins, *Levis*. 19. 17. but if thou didst, wouldst thou not desire, and mightest thou not pray the Lord to bless thy reprooves?

(c) Gal. 3. 1.

But though, thus we are obliged to pray for all men, specially for our relations, our brethren, kinsmen, magistrates, &c. Yet amongst all these, the Elect should have the preheminence. There is a peculiar bond lying upon us to desire and pray for their good; and we may more comfortably and confidently perform that duty towards them than others; then our desires and Gods (d) decree, promise and providence do meet in one point, and such prayers shall certainly at length be answered: Christ prayed for all these, *Joh*. 17. 20. and his prayer is on record; and now in heaven he reneweth it, and still liveth to make intercession for such. And should not we joyn and add our poor weak concurrence? they are those with whom we must dwell for ever, and with whom we must joyn in uninterrupted praises, and shall we not now allow them any room in our prayers. But yet there is a more

(d) Though neither the decree nor providence of God be our rule, yet both are a comfortable motive to pray.

special obligation lying on us towards them who already beleeve and are of the *household of faith*, as we should *speci-ally do good unto them*, Gal. 6. 10. so in a special manner we are obliged to pray for, and desire their good. They are the object, not only of Gods *benevolence*, but also of his *beneficence* and *complacence*, they are actually in Christ, and *members* of his body, and must not then the *union* be intimate and strong? And should not their *communion* answer and keep some proportion therewith? and must there not be a tender

(e) *sympathy* amongst the members of one body? they will together suffer, and rejoyce together, 1 Cor. 12. 26, 27. And as the feet will walk, and the hands work for the good of the rest of the members, should not also the tongue speak for their good? The Saints have few friends, but many enemies, Sathan and the world do rage, and will ye stand by? they desire and expect your help, and will you disappoint them? you are the favourites of heaven, ye have the Kings ear, and will you not improve your moyen for the good of poor Saints? shall your friends, who expect your help, be forgotten? will ye prove so unfaithfull and so unkind, and will ye thus by your negligence betray that trust that is lying upon you, and not improve that price that is put in your hand? you may be instruments of much good to others, and will you defraud them of what they may expect, yea, and what as debt ye ow to them? (Gods command to you to pray for them, is their bond whereby you are become their debtors) and which notwithstanding they are ready to pay you again in kind, and in your own coyn: and ye need not be afraid, that the master will upbraid you for pleading for them, they will not prove ungrate, and make their mercies weapons of unrighteousness; and your prayers, as they may prove instrumental for the obtaining, so for the right improvement of their mercies. And as thus the obligation is great, so also the encouragement. What a refreshing and engaging motive was it to *Paul* to pray for the Ephesians, when he heard of their faith and love? *Eph.* 2. 15, 16. and for the Philippians; when he considered their constancy and their fellowship in the Gospel, *Phil.* 1. 4, 5, 6. &c.

Hence

(e) *Amicorum*
ἐστὶν καὶ οὐκ
ἐν τῇ οὐρανῳ, Arist.
idem velle at-
que idem nolle
ea demum vera
amicitia est
Salust. amicus
quasi alter
idem, amici-
tia una anima
in duobus cor-
poribus. Ami-
corum commu-
nio omnia.
dicta Pythag.

Hence from this duty, we may infer another, as we should pray for the Saints, so we should desire and beg their prayers; we should open up our case to them, and (f) *confesse* (c) Jam. 5. 16; *our faults one to another*, that they may know what to ask for us; and if you will not, you undervalue Gods care for you in ingaging them by command to perform this duty towards you. 2. Ye undervalue his bounty in encouraging them by a promise of success, Jam. 5. 16. 1 Joh. 5. 16. Isa. 45. 11. 3. Ye wrong the Saints in undervaluing their priviledge, as if they were not Gods favourits, and had not moyen with him; these who are in Kings Courts will not want imployment: And yet, 4. ye dispise your own mercies, and are not sensible of your own wants, who will not make use of this promising mean of relief; and it must either be foolish modesty, or base pride, that must occasion the neglect hereof, (ignorance can hardly be pretended in so clear a case) what? art thou (a poor weak indigent creature) ashamed to seek help? (g) *Daniel*, (h) *Esther* and (i) *Paul*, though eminent Saints and great favourits of heaven, were not ashamed; they knew the prevalency of joint prayer, which to enemies is (k) *terrible, like an army with banners*, and to friends comfortable, like (l) *streams from Lebanon*. As in the natural body, the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee, &c. 1 Cor. 12. 21. So in this mystical body, there is a mutual dependance of one member upon another; there is no member so strong, that it needeth not the help and concurrence of the rest: no Christian should be so proud, as not to desire the prayers of the brethren, and none should be so uncharitable as to forget the fellow-heirs of the same Crown, when they approach to the throne of Grace.

For conclusion, we shall only add a word of encouragement to the Saints, and of rebuke to the wicked, intermixing a word of direction to both.

1. To you who minde this duty, and make conscience to perform it, know, that ye are honoured with this dignity to be men of publick spirits, and to have a hand in the great affairs that concern the kingdom of Christ; ye have the liberty to speak to the King as often as you will, and to obtain what you

- (g) Dan. 2.
17, 18.
- (h) Esth. 4.
16.
- (i) Rom. 15.
30. 2 Cor. 2.
11. Eph. 6.
19. Colos. 4.
3. Phil. 1. 19.
- (k) Cant. 6. 4.
- (l) Cant. 4. 15.

desire; and thus you may have (if your negligence do no hinder) a hand in all the mercies the Saints enjoy, whether national or personal, temporal or spiritual; thou mayest be instrumental in the procuring of these, and none may say they ow no thanks to thee, who art an honest supplicant and favourit of the great King; though thou hast not purchased their mercies with thy mony (Ah! what hath the poor begger to give for an almes?) yet thy request hath prevailed, and thy prayers have gotten a gracious return; though the Lord hath blasted all means we essayed for our deliverance from the oppression of usurping Sectaries, yet the Saints by their prayers have had a hand in it, and who ever take to themselves the glory of the work, yet the Lord knoweth, that Scottish men and women, who with fasting and supplications were wrestling with him, did obtain this mercy as a return of their prayers: And the hand of the Lord may evidently be seen in it, he bowed the hearts of some, and turned the hands of others, employing them against their heart, to hold the sword for the terror of those who were in armes, or might rise to oppose the work, which they themselves did as much hate (whatever was the design of some of the chief leaders of the English army, who went from *Scotland* in that service, yet it is well enough known that the generality of instruments deserved little thanks, as going about a work they neither loved nor intended.) O then let all and every one of us pray that this mercy may be improven for the glory of the giver, the honour of the King, and the good of those, who did wrestle at the throne of grace till they obtained a grant: And as the Saints are thus great adventurers for others, and send many packs to sea in their name, so there be many that are employed in their business, and who agent their cause; as they are great *Factors*, so they are great *Merchants*; as they adventure for many, so many for them. *The care of all the Saints lyeth upon every Saint.* And how pressing a motive should that be for thee (O (m) heir of the promise!) to pray for others, while thou considerest, that thy trade is going on while thou art a sleep, and in as many places, cities and families as call upon the name of our Lord Jesus? and how

(m) Heb. 6. 17.

For whom we should pray.

how should thy heart rejoyce when thou lookest upon such a town and incorporation, such a house and family, and canst say, thats my shop, there they are treading for me; there some are praying and wrestling at the Thron for some one mercy or other to be bestowed on me? And how should the consideration hereof stir us up to be more and more free in opening up our condition one to another, that we may know what in particular to ask for one another? the

(n) want of this liberty and freedom is in great part (*I dare say*) the cause why many walk so uncomfortably; many are weak faint and disquieted, and are ashamed to tell what aileth them, and God punisheth their pride with desertion, and suffereth them to (*) *ly amongst the pots* till they call for help from their brethren.

I have sometimes reflected on *Job. 42. 8.* to know why the Lord did commend *Eliphaz, Bildad* and *Zophar* unto *Jobs* prayers, adding a threatening if they should presume to offer up a sacrifice to him till *Job* did pray for them, though they were holy men, and had pleaded zealously for the Lord, yet for their mistake, and want of charity towards *Job*, though they should pray, God would hide his face, till *Job* joyned in the work; but we may to good purpose apply that place to

(n) *I shall now offer to your consideration a motion made by a judicious Divine, with his request that few or none make conscience to seek after that promising remedy held forth by him there, In such a case (viz. of Spirituall desertion) Com-*

mend (*sith be*) thy condition to the publick prayers of the Church, especially upon dayes of solemn seeking God: if persons be sick and in danger of death, then a Minister shall have a bill handed to him, to pray for their bodily health; but I wonder that amongst all our bills there are no complaints of soul-sickness? Oh! beloved, It would do a Ministers heart good (as we say) to receive a score or two of bills upon a sabbath day to this purpose, one that hath a hard heart, that hath been often heated and is grown cold again, one that hath been long under conviction, and finds no gracious issue of it, one that cries aloud after God and can have no answer, one that is assaulted with fearfull temptations, that cannot get any evidence of Gods love, and goes heavily all the day long &c. desires their prayers. It may be God expects ye should thus make many friends to speak to him, that thanks may be rendered by many on your behalfs, as the Apostle expresseth himself in a like case *2 Cor. 1. 11. &c. Sym. Ford* Spirit of bond. and Adopt. 2 Treat. Ch. 15. Pag. 30. *if the Saints do thus need the publick prayers of the congregation, must not ignorant secure hard hearted sinners stand in far greater need of this help? with what seriousness and fervency should they commend their condition to the prayers of the Church? but alas! many will rather perish then complain of their case and danger.* (o) *Psalm 68. 3.*

this

this case: it may be a pardon is sealed in heaven, but the sense of it is withheld till some one or other *Job* do pray for thee; the Lord may make choice of thy brothers prayer rather then thine own, as the messenger by whom he will send the mercy thou longest for; now consider who this *Job* was.

1. He was an eminent Saint, a great favourite of heaven, *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Iob*, *Ezek.* 14. 14. as *Moses* and *Samuel*, *Jer.* 15. 1. are recorded amongst the *worthies* of the great King, and that rather because of their power *With him* then *over men*; and the case was rare (such as that there mentioned) in which they could not prevail and obtain what they askt: what meanest thou, O Saint! thus to mourn and complain; is there not a Saint on earth to whom thou mayest commend thy case? and if thou be living under the charge of a faithfull Minister, who can be more fit to minister comfort and be an instrument of good to thy soul? The Lord will bless his own Ordinance, and he will have thee to run to it; but what ever good may be expected from thence, thou mayest employ the help of others, the more joyn in the work, and the more eminent they are for holiness, their prayers will be the more prevalent: when two or three are met together, and when they agree in the matter of their supplication (though they be in different places) they may expect a special blessing, *Mat.* 18. 19, 20. Faithfull *Abraham* could have obtained mercy for the abominable *Sodomites*, if there had been ten righteous ones amongst them, *Gen.* 18. 32. and meek *Moses* was heard, and did prevail for an idolatrous, stubborn, and most ungrate people, *Exod.* 32. *Exod.* 33.

2. *Job* was one whom those his friends had wronged, they added affliction to the afflicted, and pronounced a rash and uncharitable sentence against him, and the Lord would not accept their prayers till *Job* (whom they had accounted a very hypocrite) did intercede for them: if then thou hast injured thy brother, if he hath ought against thee, leave thy gift before the Altar, go thy way, first be reconciled to him, and then come and offer thy gift, *Mat.* 3. 23, 24. But offer not alone, let thy brother joyn with thee in the sacrifice; it may be thy acceptance depends upon his concurrence: but, especially

especially, if he be a Saint whom thou hast wronged, if thou hast been uncharitable to him, and dealt hardly with him, go to him and confesse thy fault, and beg the help of his prayers; (p) Rom. 15. and thus ye may mutually conspire and lay a mighty siege to heaven, and continuing thus to (p) wrestle together, ye must prevail. Such professors as are proud, disdainfull, censorious, envious, and living at variance with their brethren, if their graces be weak, their enlargement little, and their consolations rare, let them consider where the blame lieth. (u) Job 13. 24, 25, 16, 17.

3. Job was one whom the Lord had grievously afflicted, The terrours of God did (as he (q) complaineth) set them- selves in array against him, the arrows of the almighty were 6. within him, (r) the Lord hunted him as a fierce Lyon, and (s) set him up as a mark at which he did shoot, he (t) multiplied his wounds, and he did break him with a sore tempest, (u) his feet were casten in the stocks, and he was broken as a alioquin nullo leaf driven to and fro, and pursued like dry stubble, the Lord las esser usus did write bitter things against him, as if he had held him for his enemy, &c. And should not to him that is afflicted pity be (x) shown by his friends? but they (y) dealt deceitfully with him, He was wounded in the (z) house of his friends. They proved miserable comforters, and (a) physicians of no value, therefore the Lord did break them with a grievous wound, putting the plaister, that only could cure them, into Job's hand: As a tender parent takes special notice of the sick child, so the Lord of the afflicted Saints, and most severely punisheth the injuries done to them. See, Obad. 10, 11, 12, 13, 24. &c. And the prayers of the afflicted are very powerful and prevailing; the sick child must not be refused; If then, thou (b) hast spoken proudly in the day of distress, recommend thy self to the prayers of the afflicted, lest (c) the Lord deal with you according to your folly. (d) Quam severi vindictas in id ipsum, nec bis idem remun-

Thus I have insisted a while in discovering this treasury of the Church, far more precious, excellent and usefull, then that of gold and rubies; not that popish treasure, filled with the fictitious merits and (d) superfluous (as Cajetan speaketh) satisfaction of the Saints departed, but the treasure of the living Saints intercession; the Dispensation whereof belongeth

eth not to the Pope, but to every Saint, all who have an interest in this treasure, have a key, and may open it when they will, for the relief of themselves and all their brethren. And this treasure, viz. the common stock of the Saints prayers, (if we would speak properly) is rather the key, then the true treasure it self, which is only Christs satisfaction and intercession: but yet in that the other is the porch whereat we must enter, and the messenger which bringeth from thence a supply for all our wants and maladies, it may *metonymically* be called a treasure, and rather then that anti-scriptural and irrational popish dream of Saint-satisfaction.

- (e) Job 15. 4. As for these, who (as (e) *Eliphaz* unjustly charged *Job*) cast off fear and restrain prayer, what good can the prayers of all the Saints do to such? albeit through their prayers, the Spirit of prayer and supplication may be poured out upon thee, who wast as a (f) bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, yet unlesse at length, thou put in thy neck and joyn in the duty, the prayers of others cannot profit thee. Its the character of a gracelesse heart, when Gods hand is stretched out against it, to imploy others to interceed; but not to lift up a voyce for it self, as we may see in *Pharaoh*, Exod. 10. 17. *Jeroboam*, 2 King. 13. 6. *Simon* the Sorcerer. *Act.* 8. 24.

Obj. Yet (you will say) *Moses* was heard for *Pharaoh*, and the man of God for *Jeroboam*. Ans. As the Lord out of a common providence, may bestow many outward mercies and deliverances to the wicked for his peoples sake, with whom they are incorporated; so they may meet with some special dispensations, as to these outward things, upon the prayers of the Saints. The Lord to evidence the greatness of his love towards his chosen ones, will thus hear them, while they interceed for the wicked; as that (g) *legio fulminatrix* obtained water to refresh, and a notable victory unto the host of the pagan-persecuting Emperour *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*. But these mercies, though never so great and singular, yet wanted the marrow and substance, and in the issue proved through their abuse, rather cursings then blessings. And as for spiritual mercies, which only deserve the name, no prayerlesse soul did ever tast of these. But

(g) *Vid. hist. apud Euseb. lib. 5. cap. 5. Magdeburg. cen. 1. Luc. Off. and cen. 1. lib. 3. cap. 12. &c.*

But you will say, who is he that doth not pray? *Ans.*
 But, I would rather ask, who is he that doth pray?
 That which is currant and passeth for good coyn amongst men,
 God will reject as (f) reprobate silver; the prayer of the
 wicked, is an abomination rather then devotion, *Prov.* 28. 9. (f) *Jer.* 6. 32.
Prov. 2. 27. The Lord doth not regard the prayer of him,
 who regardeth iniquity in his heart, *Psa.* 66. 18. O then I
 cast off and break asunder the cords of sin, and call upon God
 with the whol heart, that he may hear thee when thou cry-
 est; and may fulfill the desires of others for thee.

And if the prayers of the Saints for prayer-lesse wretches
 prove unsuccessfull, and can do those misers no good, what
 shall we think of their prayers for others, who make not
 conscience to pray for themselves? O I how should it vex
 our souls to hear that cursed crue of vagabond beggars (who
 have no other rhetorick but their counterfeit prayers and
 flattering praises) to interpose the name of the great God for
 every morsel of bread they ask, and to take his dreadfull name
 in vain, in their frequent prayers promiscuously poured out
 for every giver, without all life or sense? Who would not
 mock a Traytor, who should undertake to go to Court and
 plead for others? and what King would suffer himself to be
 thus abused? and what a return might such as employed
 rebels to interceed for them expect? but if the rebell will lay
 down his arms and submit to the King, if he will beg pardon
 for his former rebellion, and make his peace, others may be
 heard, while they interceed for favour to be shewed to him,
 and in proceess of time, he may get the Kings ear, and have
 moyen to plead and prevail for others.

CHAP. VIII.

What it is to ask in the name of Christ, why we must, and whether the Jewish Church did pray in his name?

Joh. 16. 23. Whatsoever ye shall ask the father in my Name, he will give it you, Joh. 14. 13, 14. Whatsoever Ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do, &c.

ALbeit every act of worship and adoration must ultimately be terminated in God, and be equally directed to all the persons of the blessed Trinity, as its chief and principal object, and therefore in prayer (as a main point of divine worship) we must draw nigh to God, and offer up our desires to the Father, Son and holy Ghost, as having one and the same divine nature, power and glory; yet in this spiritual performance (as also in every other ordinance) there is something, as it were, proper and peculiar to each person of the Trinity; as we shall more fully shew, *Part. 3. Chap. 1.* where we are to enquire, how we should conceive of God in prayer, and after what order we should direct our petitions to each of these glorious persons? But now, in a word, we take notice how the Apostle expresseth this appropriation, *Eph. 2. 18.* where we are said *through Christ to have access to the Father by the Spirit*; 1. The holy Ghost dictates and draws up our bill; 2. The Son gets us access and audience, he presents and pleads our cause; and, 3. The Father accepteth and granteth our requests; which being thus framed by the Spirit, and perfumed with Christs incense, must be a (a) sacrifice acceptable, and well-pleasing odour of a sweet smell to God. We will not now ask, why we are said to have access to the Father, while we must also approach the Son and holy Ghost; but remitting that to its own place, we shall now, for clearing the description of prayer, only show, 1. what it is to pray through Christ or in his name; 2. what it is to pray by the holy Ghost, and what is the help and assistance he affordeth: of the first, in this; and of the second, in the following Chapter.

Time

(a) Phil. 4. 18.

Time was, when there was a sweet communion between God and man; and that was mans happinesse; he needed not have been afraid to approach the Throne; but sin did make a wofull breach and separation, and ever since the apostat rebel hath lien under a twofold incapacity to draw near to the King; 1. *Morall*, in respect of guiltinesse and provocation; the wrath and terrours of the provoked majestie, like that flaming sword, *Gen.* 3. 24. doth guard the way, and hold off the rebel, that he may not approach the Throne; fear did not keep man from sinning and departing from God, therefore fear shall arrest him in the place that he dar not return; 2. *Physicall*, in respect of weaknesse and impotency, and that not merely *privative*, but accompanied with a *positive* enmity, stubbornnesse and averfenesse from returning. Man by his fall did not only break his leggs, and so dis-enable himself, that from that time forth he had no strength to ascend to the place from which he fell; but also, like some vagabonds who having resolved to make a tread of begging, rejoyce in their impotency and sores, and refuse to be healed; so the wretched sinner accounts his losse gain, and rejoyceth to wallow in the mire into which he hath fallen, hating God, and abhorring a communion with him, he doth not consider nor lay to heart his own misery and unhappinesse.

But while no Physician was employed, nor could be found to cure this desperat disease and soul-lethargy, our blessed Saviour was (b) found of them that sought him not. When he looked and (c) saw none to help or uphold, his own arm brought Salvation; (d) when no eye pitied us to have compassion upon us, when we were cast out into the open feild, to the loathing of our person being polluted and wallowing in our own blood, when he passed by and looked upon us, that was a time of love; he spread his skirt over us, and covered our nakedness, and while we were lying in our blood he said unto us, live, and to a generation not worthy to be pitied, (e) behold me, behold me; he became a (f) brazen Serpent, saying to all these that were bitten and stinged to death by the old serpent - (g) look unto me, and be ye saved. When the precious redemption of the soul did cease for ever, and

(b) Isa. 65. 1.
(c) Isa. 63. 5.
(d) Ezek. 16. 5, 6, 8.

(e) Isa. 65. 1.
(f) Numb. 21. 9.
(g) Isa. 45. 22.

None was able to give God a ransom for it, *Psa.* 49. 7, 8. He gave his precious soul an offering for our sin, *I/a.* 53. 10. When none could cure our sores, he made a plaster of his own blood, he did bear our griefs, and carried our sorrows, he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed, *I/a.* 53. 4, 5.

And now all honor and praise be to our physician, who hath cured all our sores, and hath removed both that morall and physicall incapacity and impotency, of which we did labor; He hath, 1. by his blood washen away the guilt, so that now there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; Secondly, by his Spirit (whose *(h)* sending into our hearts he hath also purchased with his blood) he strengthneth us with might in the inner man, *Eph.* 3. 16. the Spirit of Christ will make us both *willing* and *able* to draw nigh to God. Thirdly, he hath purchased liberty and access, and now *by his blood we have boldnesse to enter into the Holiest by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us; Heb.* 10. 19, 20. Fourthly, he hath purchased to us success and a safe return of our prayers; so that the Father now can deny us nothing we ask in his name. *John.* 16. 23.

(h) *Gal.* 4. 5.
6. *Ioh.* 14. 26.
Ioh. 15. 26.
Iohn. 16. 14.

(i) *Col.* 3. 11.

(k) *Mal.* 2. 3.

(l) *Ioh.* 3. 16.

(m) *Solus enim etiam apud nos multum valere amicorum dilectio & quod propter ipsos etiam absentes & mortuos rogamur prompte facimus To let in Iohn.* 16. 23.

Thus to us *(i)* Christ is all, in point of, 1. reconciliation; 2. assistance; 3. access; and, 4. success; and should we not then draw nigh to God in his name? and may we not fear lest God prove a consuming fire, and *(k)* spread upon our faces the dung of our sacrifices, if they be not offered up by the hand of this our high Priest? but when we approach in his name, we must prevaile in him, we have access with confidence, and may come boldly to the Throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, *Eph.* 3. 12. *Heb.* 4. 14, 16.

And there be these three most powerfull grounds of this prevalency, whereupon our confidence should be built when we approach in his name.

1. The Fathers love and tender bowels towards his only begotten son, *Mat.* 3. 17. *Iohn.* 3. 35. and. 5. 20. *Col.* 1. 13. *Heb.* 3. 6. the *(m)* name of a dear freind, though absent

or

or dead, will be very prevalent with us for obtaining a favour; and shall not the name of Christ (who ever liveth with the Father, and who hath the same nature and will with the Father) being interposed, obtain a grant to our desires? Was the remembrance of *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, who were Gods (*n*) friends, pleaded as a motive for the Lord to show mercy to their posterity, *Exod.* 32. 13. *Deut.* 9. 27. &c. (n) 1 Chr. 10. 7. Isa. 41. 8. And shall the Lord reject us when we come to him in the name of his dearly beloved Son?

2. His blood and sufferings, that price he hath laid down for all our mercies; though we can only plead mercy and grace, yet our cautioner hath satisfied divine justice; he hath purchased us and all our mercies at a dear rate, *Act.* 20. 28. *Eph.* 1. 5. and 2. 13. *Col.* 1. 20. *1 Cor.* 3. 2, 22, 23. &c.

3. His intercession and appearing in the heavens, pleading our cause with the Father there, and seconding the cry of his blood which was shed on earth, and obtaining to us, what he purchased by it. See *Chap.* 5.

And thus, though we should pray in the holy Ghost, *Jud.* 20. yet not in the name of the holy Ghost; the Spirit must help us to pray, but he is not our Mediator, for whose sake our prayers are accepted. I have (o) read of *Arrius*, that one of his heresies was, that he attributed the office of mediator to the holy Ghost; but why should we stay to confute that dream; and to show, that as there is but one God, so there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom to redeem lost men? *1 Tim.* 2. 5, 6. For clearing of this point, we will show. 1. what it is to ask in Christs name; 2. why we must ask in his name; 3. whether the Jewish Church did believe in him and pray in his name; 4. we will close with a word of application.

For the first, To pray in Christs name, is not a work of the (p) lips, or to say, *Lord hear us for Christs sake*; we dishonour Christ, and we mock the Father, when thus we take his name in vain, and mention it in our prayers without reverence and dependance on him for an answer. You will say, what then doth this phrase import? *Ans.* If we per-

(o) Jenkin on Jude 10.

(p) Non enim sonum literarum ac syllabarum, sed quod sonus ipse significat quod est (non recte ac veritate) intelligendus est dicere cum dicitur in nomine meo. Aug. tract. 102, in Joan.

(q) Non petimus in nomine magistri quod petimus præter regulam ipsius magisterii. Aug. traç. 73. in Joan.

pend it as in the Scriptures attributed, either to the Father or Son, we will find, that it doth signifie as to our purpose (for it hath severall other significations) 1. his (q) command and appointment, as, *Exod.* 5. 23. *Dent.* 18. 20. *Mat.* 18. 20. Secondly, his help and assistance, or our dependance upon his strength and power; as, *Ps.* 44. 5. 1 *Sam.* 17. 45. *Luk.* 10. 17. Thirdly, his glory, as the end of our actions, and the dispensations of providence towards us, *Col.* 3. 17. *Mat.* 18. 20. *Ps.* 31. 3. Fourthly, as it is particularly attributed to Christ, especially and most usually it importeth our dependance on him, as our Mediator and advocate, and our confidence in his merit and intercession; as *Joh.* 14. 13, 14, and 16. 23. &c. And in this last sense, especially, we are said to pray in Christ's name. For though, 1. we must have his warrant and approbation, and look to his will and command; and, 2. though we must expect strength and assistance from him, and, 3. though we must aim at his glory in all our desires, yet while it is required that we should pray in his name, these things are as it were presupposed, and directly, principally and properly, is only held forth our dependance on him, as our Redeemer, Reconciler, Mediator, and Advocate with the Father, in whom alone, and through whose merit, intercession and satisfaction, we expect access, acceptance and audience of our prayers. Two ancient Doctors, viz. the judicious (r) *Augustine* and

(r) *Evigila*
igitur homo
fideli, & vi-
gilanter audi
quod illic po-
nitum est in
nomine meo,
qui promissit ergo tam magnum beneficium, qui vocatur? unusquisque Christus fesus, Christus significat regem, fesus saluatorem, non itaque nos salvos faciet quicumque rex, sed rex saluator, ac per hoc quodcumque petimus adversus utilitatem salutis, non petimus in nomine saluatoris. Et tamen ipse saluator est, non solum quando facit quod petimus, verum etiam quando non facit: quoniam quod videt peti contra salutem, non faciendo potius se exhibet saluatorem: novit enim medicus quid pro sua, quid contra suam levitatem poscat agrolus: & ideo contraria poscentis non facit voluntatem, ut faciat sanitatem — si autem qui in eum credit aliquid per ignorantiam contra suam salutem petit, non in nomine saluatoris potest, quia saluator ei non erit, si quod ejus salutem impedit fecerit, unde tunc expedit potius ut non faciendo propter quod invocatur faciat quod vocatur — ut sic intelligamus non petere nos in nomine magistri quod petimus præter regulam ipsius magisterii, Aug. traç. 73. in Joan. vide etiam. traç. 81. & 102.

What it is to ask in the name of Christ.

(1) *Gregory*, have made an allusion to the name *Jesus*, holding for a truth in their interpretation, but a little beside the scope and genuine meaning of that phrase. For (they say) since *Jesus* signifieth a *Saviour*, he doth ask in his name, who asketh that which is profitable unto salvation, and whatsoever is contrary to salvation cannot be askt in his name; *Christ*, as a *Saviour*, doth no less refuse to answer our selfish and carnal desires, as grant our spiritual and well regulated petitions. He is our great Physician, who hath undertaken the cure of all our soul-maladies, and were he a faithfull Physician who would please his patient, by giving what were pleasant to the taste, if obstructive of health?

(1) *Nomen filii Jესus est, Jესus autem saluator vocatur; ille ergo in nomine salvatoris petit qui illud petit quod ad veram salutem pertinet; non si id quod non expedit petitur, non in no-*

mine Jესu petitur pater; unde & eisdem apostolis adhuc infirmantibus dominus dicit, usque modo non petistis quicquam in nomine meo, ac si aperte diceretur, non petistis in nomine salvatoris qui necis querere aeternam salutem. Hinc est quod & Paulus non exauditur, quia si liberaretur a tentatione, et non prodesset ad salutem, &c. Greg. mag. hom. 27. in evang. vid. etiam Theophylact in Joan. 16. 24. As for Augustinus his reason, viz. that all other things in comparison of salvation and spiritual mercies, are as nothing. Quicquid ergo petitur quod pertinet ad hoc gaudium (de quo Joan. 16. 24.) consequendum hoc est in nomine Christi petendum, si divinam intelligimus gratiam, si vere beatam poscimus vitam, quicquid autem aliud petitur nihil petitur; non quia nulla omnino res est, sed quia in tanta rei comparatione quicquid aliud concupiscitur, nihil est, Aug. tract. 10. in joan. This reason (1 say) though it hold forth a considerable truth too little pondred, yet it doth not conclude the point for which it is brought; for 1. though temporals be not such and so great mercies as spirituals, yet they are mercies, they are good, expedient and desirable, and so must be askt; and therefore in his name, who is the purchaser of all our mercies. And, 2. all these things are subservient unto, and may some one way or other contribute for our salvation, we may trade for heaven with our money on earth, and should improve all our mercies for the honour of the giver.

There is a second conjecture of the same Author which we did not mention, because though it contain one of the pre-requisites to our asking in Christs name, viz. the sound knowledge of his person and office, yet serveth not for clearing the meaning and proper sense of that phrase. Unde (inquit) qui hoc sentis de Christo quod non est de unico Dei filio (sentendum, non petit in ejus nomine etiamsi non vacat in eo licetis ac syllabis Christum; quoniam in ejus nomine petit quem cogitat cum petit; qui vero quod est de illo (sentendum sentis, ipse in ejus nomine petit & accipit quod petit, si non contra suam salutem sempiternam petit, August. tract. 10. in Joan.

(c) *In nomine Christi petere efficacissimus ritus, est impetrandi a patre.* Tolet. in Joan. 16. 23.

Albeit this gloss do not serve for clearing the words, which do not speak of the quality of the matter of our petitions, but of the way how we should ask, and the (2) ground of their prevalency, and which we should plead and interpose in all our petitions. Though (I say) these Doctors do not thus show what it is to ask in Christs name, yet while we come in his name, he will deal thus with us; when we trust him, and rely upon him, he will make a right choyce for us, he will give what is good, but will not satisfie our foolish desires: We shall not want bread, but he will not give a Serpent, though we (bewitched with its fair and beautifull colours) do ask it most importunately.

Reas. 1.

Secondly. As for reasons, we may argue, 1. from Gods justice and holiness, he is of purer eyes then to behold evil, or look on iniquity, *Hab. 1. 13.* with him is terrible majesty, *Job 37. 22.* He is a consuming fire, and we sinners are as dry stubble, *Heb. 12. 29. Deut. 4. 24. Isa. 13. 9.* And shall stubble approach the fire without a covering, shelter and fence?

Reas. 2.

(u) *Eph. 2. 3.*

2. We argue from that indisposition and unfitness, that opposition and unwillingness, yea, hatred and enmity, that naturally is radicated in us against the Lord and a communion with him. We are (u) children of wrath, both *objectively* and *subjectively*, as hated, so haters of God; as under the curse and sentence of condemnation, so dayly deserving that wofull sentence, still grieving and provoking the holy Lord, all the thoughts and imaginations of the heart being only evil continually, *Rom. 5. 10. 12. Gal. 3. 10. Gen. 6. 5.* How then dare such rebels approach the provoked King without a mediator and intercessor?

Reas. 3.

Thirdly, Our weakness and impotency doth stand in the way; as we are morally unfit, in respect of guilt, so we are physically impotent, and want strength to ascend to the Throne, *Rom. 5. 6. 2 Cor. 3. 5.* And therefore unless the Spirit of Christ strengthen us with might in the inner man, we know not, we cannot pray as we ought, *Eph. 3. 16. Rom. 8. 26.* without Christ we can do nothing, *Job. 15. 5.* shall we then presume to draw nigh to God without him, or to offer any desire but

in

in his name? So much for obstructions, impediments, and (as I may call them) negatives. Now let us argue from the several benefits purchased by Christ, his offices and the relation under which he standeth to us, and other positive grounds.

Fourthly, then we must approach to God in his name, because he is our peace, *Mic. 5. 5. Isa. 53. 5.* He is our propitiation and reconciliation, *Rom. 3. 25. 1 Job. 2. 2. Col. 1. 20.* He is the alone way, *Ioh. 14. 6.* He is the door, *Ioh. 10. 7.* He is the true vine and fruitful roor, which communiceth sap to all the branches, *Ioh. 15. 1, 5. Isa. 11. 10.* He is the foundation and corner stone of all the building, *Eph. 2. 20, 21.* He is the fountain from which all our mercies, as so many streams, do flow, *Zech. 13. 1.* He is the head, from which all the body receiveth nourishment, and encrease with the encrease of God, *Col. 2. 19.* Nay, he is all, and in all, both in point of doing and receiving; as without him we can do nothing, *Ioh. 15. 5.* so we can receive nothing; all are ours, if we be in Christ, *1 Cor. 3. 22, 23.* but without him we can receive nothing as a mercy and blessing, and can have no sanctified right and title unto it; for he is heir of all things, *Heb. 1. 2.* He is the alone treasure and store-house of all our mercies, he is the hand and the conduit, whereby all good is conveyed to us; and what can the Apostle say more (and if lesse, he had come short of his fulness and sufficiency) *Christ is all, Col. 3. 11.* Hence we may instance some few particulars, and from these draw so many several arguments.

As first, Can two walk together, except they be agreed? *Amos, 3. 3.* Can there be any fellowship and communion between them who are at enmity? and there was none but Christ who could interpose, only he, by his death hath abolished and slain the enmity, and put us (who were as far off as devils) in a capacity to draw nigh to God, *Ephes. 2. 13, 14, 15, 16.*

But secondly, though subjects have not provoked their King, yet how shall they get access? they may long wait before they see his face, but as Christ hath made our peace, so he hath purchased access to us, *Eph. 2. 18.*

But thirdly, though access be gotten, yet the petition may be rejected, and not granted; but in Christ, as we have access, so also acceptance and audience; so that we may ask whatsoever we will in his name, and it will not be denied, *Eph. 1. 6. Job. 14. 13.* so that in him we may draw nigh with boldness and confidence, *Eph. 3. 12.* If his (x) incense (x) *Rev. 8. 3.* be offered with our prayers, they must be well pleasing and prevail.

Reas. 5.

The 5. reason may be taken from Christs office and relation towards us. 1. He is the alone *Mediator* between God and man, *1 Timoth. 2. 5, 6.* How then dare we make an immediat adresse to God? he purchased at too dear a rate our peace and acceptance with God, and shall we, (1.) so far undervalue what he did and suffered for us, as not to improve his mediation? or, (2.) thus slight the love of the Father, (who spared not his only begotten Son that he might purchase that privilege to us) as not to make use of what he hath procured to us by his sons death? 2. He is our priest, the high priest of our profession, *Heb. 3. 1.* How then dare we offer any sacrifice but by his hand? all oblations under the law must be brought to the priest, (if any other presumed to offer he must die) the Lord thereby would typifie and represent to us the necessity of Christs priesthood, and the offering up of all our spirituall sacrifices in his name. 3. He is our *Advocat* who ever liveth to make intercession for us, *1 Iob. 2. 1. Heb. 7. 25.* Ah! what can the client say, when he cometh before the judge, who hath not employed an *Advocat* to plead his cause? 4. The many-fold and binding relations under which he standeth to us, may encourage us to employ his help, and to come in his

(y) *Isa. 9. 6.* name; he is our (y) Father, (z) brother, and (a) friend, (z) *Heb. 2. 11.* he hath moeyn at court, and will we not improve that for (a) *Ioh. 15. 13.* our access and acceptance? When the men of *Tyre* and *Sidon* had made *Blasius* the Kings chamberlain their friend, by him they make their adresse to the king. *Act. 12. 20.* Christ is our *Blasius*, he is neerer then a servant, he is the Kings beloved and only begotten Son, who will not only (like him) speak some few words in the behalf of these who have fled to him (b) *Heb. 6. 8.* for (b) refuge, but hath shed his blood and tread the Vine-
 presse

preſſe of the fierceneſſe and wrath of almighty God, Rev. 19. 15. and ſhall he not then be heard in our behalf, and we when we come in his name?

6. We argue from the nature and condition of this exerciſe, our prayers are not ſimple requeſts, but rationall plea's, in which we plead with the Lord, we improve the promiſes, and aſk covenanted mercies; and he in faithfullneſſe and righteouſneſſe is ſaid to hear and aſwer us, and all his wayes towards the Saints to be not only mercy but truth, P/a, 143. 1. P/a. 111. 8. P/a. 25. 10. But we cannot plead the promiſes, we cannot lay claim to any of them, we cannot plead the Lords faithfullneſſe and truth, but through Chriſt; all the promiſes, as to us, are as ſo many blank bonds, and we dare not put in our name till we bring our cautioner alongſt with us; we have no moyen nor truſt, we have no dexterity nor ſkill to writ one letter, till Chriſt put the pen in our hand, and dip it in his blood; there is no other ink wherewith we can inſert our name, God will not acknowledge any characters as genuine and authentick which are not thus engraven; our works and ſufferings, our complaints and tears, are an (c) *Pro. 2. 27.* abomination, they are but (d) *Phil. 3. 8.* dung, and as a loathſome and (e) *Iſa. 64. 6.* *menſtruous* cloſth; Ah! theſe can make no impreſſion, nor give to the banquerupt ſinner any right to theſe bills of exchange, which our Father hath ſent to his children in this their Pilgrimage, nor to the portion bequeathed to us by our Elder brother in his legacy and teſtament; for in Chriſt Jeſus all the promiſes are yea and amen, in him they were made, in him they are applyed to us, and have their accompliſhment 2 Cor. 1. 20. and therefore while we are without Chriſt we are (f) *Though we* aliens and ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe, Eph. 2. 12. and ſo cannot (f) *may offer up a ſimple and naturall deſire, yet we may not argue from Gods fidelity and truth.* plead the accompliſhment of them.

7. Here we have a command for our warrant, and a promiſe for our encouragment, and though from the one we might gather and collect the other, theſe two being (g) *Reaf. 7. See ch. 7. Sect. 2.* inſeparable, yet both, for clearing our way, and ſtrengthening our hands, are expreſſed. Job. 16. 24. 23. Job. 14. 13. 14.

8. We might add the conſtant practice of all Chriſtians in all ages. You will ſay, (and thus we proceed to ſpeak to the

third particular) if it be now so necessary to ask in Christs name, if our acceptance and successe depend thereupon, how came it to passe that holy men of old were strangers to, and ignorant of this manner of invocation, and that essentiall qualification of prayer? and wherefore is that made necessary to us, which was not required in others? *Ans.* We will not now dispute the question with (b) Socinians (with whom many Arminians in this, as in severall other points, do joyn) who maintain that the ancient people of God who lived before the coming of Christ were not Justified after that maner and way which we Christians are, viz by faith in a Mediator; yea, they dare (i) affirme, that the Jewes had no expresse promise of eternall life and spirituall blessings, (k) albeit some of them out of an ardent desire of immortality and from some probable conjectures, did labour to perswade themselves, that there was a life eternall after this; and not only dare they averr this of the body of that people, but also of the patriarchs, prophets, and most eminent Saints who lived before the incarnation of our blessed Lord, yea and of John the baptist, who pointed out Christ with the finger, and who because of his clear knowledge of Gospel-mysteriies, is said (as judicious Interpreters think) to be the greatest of them that had been born of Women, *Mat. 11. 11. John the Baptist*

(h) *Nec revolutum vel indicatum fuit unquam in sacris literis, nec iussifunt usquam illi veteres, nedum aliud sed neque etiam credere in Christum venturum, quod sub novo Testamento requiritur, ut necessarium sit considerare Deo per Christum quod quatenus ad id attinet, quod diximus per Christum,*

sub veteri Testamento neque necessarium fuit, nec porro in quosquam fuisse ulla ratione dici potest, Socin. frag. de just: pag. 47. 51. vid. Smalc. resp. resus. Smigles. cap. 23. & disp. 4. contra. Front. thes. 8. Ostor. just. cap. 5. Armin. resp. ad art. 31. Remonst. confess. cap. 7. sect. 8. Episcop. disp: de discrimine Vet. & N. Test. &c. (i) *Nusquam in lege Moysi reperies vel vitam eternam, aut donum spiritus sancti obedientibus praeceptis legis promissum. Catech. Racov. de proph. Fes. Gb. Mun: cap. 5. (k) Nemo negare potest sub v. Test. nec vitam eternam promissam fuisse, adeo nec modum illam consequendi, fuisse patet factum ita ut illud intelligeretur ab iis qui eam consecuturi essent; nam si nihilominus antequam Christus suum evangelium predicaret, fuerunt in populo Dei qui sibi vitam eternam pollicebantur, eamque a Deo sperabant, id non ex promissis dei aperte colligebant, sed vel mystice interpretabantur, vel praesumpto atque innato immortalitatis desiderio ipsi sibi fingeant. Socin. comment in 1 Joan. 1:4. Deum omnibus qui sub veteri Testamento sibi confisi sunt daturum vitam eternam statuendum est, non ex ullo promisso aut pacto, sed ex sola gratia & mera benignitate. Smalc hom. 3. in 1 cap Joan.*

(saith (1) Smalcus) did not understand what he preach't and promised to the penitents: And yet he granteth, that those Jews, who did trust in God, did obtain everlasting life, though not by covenant or promise, but of the meer grace and bounty of God, which doth not seem to agree well with what at another time he affirmeth, viz. That they themselves did purchase (m) pardon of sin (and so justification and life) by their sacrifices and offering up of beasts. Thus daring, in terminis to contradict the holy Ghost, testifying, that those gifts and sacrifices could not make him, who did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; nay, that it was impossible, that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins, Heb. 9. 9. and 10. 4. only the blood of Christ could do that, Heb. 9. 14.

But not purposing to enter the lists with those dreamers; for answer to the question, it would be observed, that we may know truly, what we know not distinctly and particularly; Gospel mysteries were not hidden from the Jews, albeit they had not such a measure of light as we, to whom the Sun hath risen, and doth shine as at the noon-day; they had light, but it was as the morning twilight before the day which now we enjoy, did dawn; but will any be so childish, as to argue and say, that because they knew not so much of Christ, and of the mystery of Incarnation, as we Christians, therefore they knew nothing, and were altogether ignorant of it. There is a general (and as they call it) confused knowledge of a thing, which is, as it were, a medium between ignorance and a distinct particular knowledge. These may be truly said to know a thing, who know not so much concerning it as others do; and this general and imperfect (n) knowledge of Christ, then was as efficacious to salvation, as that further measure, which Christians now have.

(1) Johannes Baptista ipse illud quod respiciensibus annuntiavit, non satis intellexit, nec illud quod promittebat aliis.
Smal. bom. 4.
(m) Modum expiandi peccata eumque non ita difficilem imo facilem admodum ostenderat sub lege Deus, facile est enim iactura pecuniarum, Smalc. resp. refut. Smagles. cap. 31.

(n) Christus non quia clarus notus servat, sed quia sincera Judaica nemo

et vere agnitus, jam vero Christum fuisse vere et sincere agnitus in ecclesia est qui possit negare quin totam neget Scripturam. Camer. praefat. in Mat. 18. 1. pag. 77. et praefat. de eccl. pag. 137.

(o) Disting-
endum inter
ignorantiam
pure negati-
vis & prava
dispositionis.

2. We would distinguish between simple (>) ignorance, and a false and erroneous apprehension and opinion: that imperfect and obscure knowledge of Christ, which was in the multitude and body of the Jewish Church, might consist, and was joyed with much ignorance, but erroneous opinions concerning Christs person, kingdom, sufferings, &c. (such as were in the Apostles, for a long time, notwithstanding of the many large and clear sermons they had heard Christ preach) these errors (I say) were not the proper and inseparable effects of their knowledge, but rather of their curiosity, oblivion, carnal reasoning, &c.

But if it be ask't, how much the weakest beleever must then have known, and what was the *minimum quod sic* of Gospel-truths, that then was fundamental, and the knowledge thereof necessary to salvation? *Ans.* I think it were more pertinent and profitable for us, thankfully to prize that measure of light reserved for us, and diligently to improve it for our comfort and the honour of the giver, then curiously to enquire what measure was dispensed unto, and required in them: though we can say little for clearing what measure was then necessary to salvation (neither needeth we change to him, who is but a little acquainted with us, which to this day are amongst the learned, fundamental articles of Christianity, what and how many there be) but to as the thing it self, that they did truly rely know the Mediator, and had so much light as to direct them in their way to God by him; may appear, 1. not to speak of *Abraham*, who saw, and rejoyced to see Christs day, *Job.* 8. 58. or of the Prophets, Patriarchs, Kings, and righteous ones, who desired to hear and see these great things, which the Apostles did behold, *Mat.* 13. 16, 17. All these having received, and seen (though a far off) the promises, *Heb.* 11. 13.) from that first, and (as I may call it) fundamental promise, *Gen.* 3. 15. that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpents head; the promise made to *Abraham*, and so often repeated, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, *Gen.* 12. 3. and 18. 18. and 22. 18. *Jacobs* old prophesie of the coming of

of *Abraham*, and the gathering of the people to him. *Gen.* 49.
10. *Jacob's* knowledge (left on record) that his Redeemer lived,
 and should come to judge the world, *Job.* 19. 25. If we
 would view the book of the *Psalms*, how many clear sermons
 and predictions are there of Christ's kingdom, priest-hood,
 sufferings, intercession, &c. And what is the scope of *Salmos*
Salmos song, but to hold out Christ's love to the Church? but
 why should I stay on particulars? since to him all the *Prophets*
 gave witness, that through his name, whosoever be-
 lieved in him, should have remission of sins. *Act.* 10. 43. and
 3. 18. But especially the Gospel (rather than prophetic) of
Isaiah, doth so clearly hold out his nativity, sufferings,
 divine nature, &c. that such as will deny these (who were
 so well acquainted with this and other Scriptures) to have
 known any thing of Christ and his mediation, must make that
 people more stupid and brutish, than the most barbarous
 nations. 2. Their daily sacrifices and manifold types, were as
 so many lectures and sermons concerning Christ, his sufferings
 and satisfaction; by these Christ was daily preach'd and held
 forth to their eyes, that being the most popular, and familiar
 kind of manifestation: And what shadow of probability can
 be alledged for their resting on their sacrifices as expiatory?
 it being impossible (and shall we think that the people of God
 and their teachers, who were taught of God, were ignorant
 of this impossibility, and that in so necessary and fundamen-
 tal a point?) that the blood of bulls and goats should take
 away sins, *Heb.* 10. 4. and that all their ceremonies and types did
 point out Christ, the writer of that epistle doth most fully and
 clearly show, arguing against the Jews, not from new grounds,
 but from acknowledged principles, and (as we speak) *ad homi-*
nem, proving that the Son of *Mary*, whom they crucified, was
 the promised *Messiah*, in whom they believed, and to whom
 they did look in all the types, sacrifices and other parts of
 worship: Nay, if *Jacob's* testament enlarged (a Copy where-
 of, translated into our language, I once had) be not supposi-
 tionous, and if we will give credit to (p) *Galatine*, and to
 these testimonies of the Jewish Rabbies, whose words he cit-
 eth, we will rather admire how they attained to such a mea-

(p) *Vid. Ga-*
larin de or-
can cath. veris,
præcipue,
Heb. 23. 3.
 6. 7.

sure of knowledge concerning the Trinity, Incarnation, Person and Offices of Christ, then once question whether they did know and believe in the *Messiah*, and looke to him in all their performances. And it is most considerable, that the Scribes and Pharisees, yea, and the rude multitude in all their debates with Christ, in all their challenges and accusations, did alwayes grant that they expected the coming of the *Messiah*, who was to be the Son of God: according to which well known principle, the high Priest adjured him to tell, (though he purposed not to believe his words) whether he was the Christ the Son of God, *Mat. 26. 63. Mark 14. 61.* And to this day, albeit they (being judicially blinded for rejecting the true *Messiah*) have many strong delusions and gross errors, both concerning his Person and Office; yet they still expect and wait for the coming of the promised (as they suppose) *Messiah*: and it is the great work of their Rabbies to enquire after the cause why he delayeth so long; and how pathetically do they all lament and mourn for this? and with what importunity and affection (though carnal and selfish)

(q) *Thom. 22. quest. 2. art. 7. ad 3. Summa Tabi. 5. edere. Ramerii pan. theol. de fide cap. 10. &c.*

(r) So *Thomas*, but *Ramerius* calleth her *Sirene*. *Joannes de Thabia* and others call her *Helena*.

(s) *Job (idem de amick ejus dicendum) non fuit indigena, nec profectum, id est, advena populi Israel, sed ex gente Idumaeae. nus ducens ibi oriens, ibidem mortuus est, August. de civ. Dei, lib. 18. cap. 47.*

do they pray for his coming? Yea, the Gentiles were not altogether left without a testimony: the Sybills prophecies of Christ were very full and clear; and (as (q) *Aquinas*, *Joannes de Thabia*, *Ramerius* and others testifie) in the reign of the Emperor *Constantine*, and his mother (r) *Irene*, there was a sepulchre found, in which did lie the corps of a man, having a golden plate on his breast, on which was this engraving, *Christ shall be born of a Virgin, and I believe in him. O, Son I thou shalt again see me in the days of Irene and Constantine.* And *Job* knew Christ distinctly, and as his Redeemer; and will any imagine that his friends, who spake so divinely of God, were ignorant of Christ? (s)

3. Christ is a Priest for ever, *Psa. 110. 4. Heb. 5. 6. Heb. 6. 20. Heb. 7. 17.* He is the same yesterday and to day, and for ever, *Heb. 13. 8.* He is the same as to the necessity and efficacy of his death and satisfaction, (albeit as to the execution of his priestly Office, he did not assume our nature, and in it die and interceed for his people, till the fulness of time came, *Gal. 4. 4.*) Salvation could never be found in

any other; there was never any other Name by which the sons of men could be saved, *Act. 4. 12.*

4. We may here add the suffrage of the learned, not only of orthodox Divines, (concerning whose testimony there will be no question) but also of popish Casuists and School-men, all of them joyning with their Masters *Lombard* and *Thomas*, and with them maintaining that Faith in the Mediator alwayes, and in every (t) state of the Church was necessary to salvation, there being no expiation of sin without his blood. Thus all of them agree in this general assertion, though they be divided as to the explication of it; some of them pleading for the necessity of an explicit faith of the mystery of Incarnation; others only requiring an implicit faith, whereby a man doth know and believe all the wayes and means which God then had, or afterwards would reveal, concerning the salvation of man: amongst which, this of the incarnation of the Son of God being one, he who thus generally believeth may be said to believe that, though he never heard any thing of Christ, his Person or Offices. Yea, some (u) extend this implicit faith to the dayes of the Gospel, holding it now to be sufficient to salvation to believe and embrace all that the Church of *Rome* believeth and maintaineth: and though now the learned Doctors of the Romish Church be ashamed to own such an assertion, yet, that opinion was common among the ancient Canonists and School-men, and hath many Patrons, such as *Innocentius*, *Joannes*, *Andreas*, *Abbas*, *Hosienfis*, *Imola*, *Ananias*, *Baldus*, *Zanchinus*, *Witiel-Parisiensis*, *Altisiodorensis*, *Summa Rosella*, &c. as (x) *Sanchez* and *Lugo* do confesse, citing these Authors for that abominable Doctrine, which they themselves would seem to disclaim: but whatever be the profession of the more learned when the point is brought to the trial; yet, such as are acquainted with their Priests carriage, in hearing confessions and absolving ignorants, know, that these judicious and tender Casuists do rest satisfied with this *blinded faith*, calling it the *mother of devotion*. But leaving these blind Guides and miserable Physicians to the sentence of the great Judge, we proceed to the other member of the distinction.

(t) *Lices Hugo de S. villos; re apud Ramer. paubol. de fide cap. 10. neges personam Mediatoris mittendam fuisse cognitam ante legem Mosai- cam; (ed Jo- an. de Lugo de virtutis fi- dei disp. 12. § 4. § 101. aliam adferre opinionem Hugonis est Suarezio, quod, viz. fides explicata Christi semper fuit necessaria in corpore Ecclesie, non vero in singulis personis.*

(u) *Explicita credere est specialiter & adualiter credere, implicita credere est generaliter credere quod Catholicæ tenet Ecclesia, vel credis: qua fides sufficit, dummodo in contrarium non sentiamur. Guid. de Baill. super doctr. dist. 15. § canones generalium.*

Fran. (x) *Loci de*

(2) *Sunt. desid.*
disp. 2. 1. sect.
3. sect. 16.
Joan. de Lu.
go de fid.
disp. 12. 1. sect.
4883.

(2) Pelagius
aitbat Chri-
stum venisse
sanctum ut
doctorem, non
autem ut mo-
diatorem &
redemptorem,
cujus meritis
justificarentur.
Dom. Bannez
in 22. quast.
2. art. 8.
sect. 3. con-
clus.

(a) *Ante le-*
gem, sub lege,
& sub gratia,
ut loquitur
Mugo apud
Ramerium,
v. q. plinius
recitat in
Evangelio.

(b) *Plat-*
on dominibus

venienti ad beatitudinem est mysterium incarnationis & passionis Christi, & ideo mysterium incarnationis Christi aliquantulum oportuit omni tempore esse creditum apud omnes, diverso modo tamen secundum diversitatem temporum & personarum. — ea qua ad mysteria Christi pertinebant, tanto difficilius cognoverunt, quanto a Christo remotiores fuerunt; & tanto distinctius cognoverunt, quanto Christo propinquiores fuerunt.] Thom. 22. quast. 2. art. 7. in corp. quast. 1. art. 7. ad im.

Frqn. (1) *Suarez,* and with him *Joan. de Lugo,* distin-
 guish four degrees of explicit faith, 1. when God is be-
 lieved in, as the Saviour and Justifier of sinners by such means
 as he hath, or shall appoint and reveal, not determining any
 in particular. And this degree doth very little differ from
 that which is most implicit, except that it condescendeth on
 our misery, and upon a remedy in the general. 2. When a
 Mediator is known and beleaved on, not determining the
 particular way of redemption, and whether that Mediator
 be God or not. 3. When the divine nature of the Mediator
 is also known and beleaved, but not the way and maner of
 Redemption. 4. When both the God-head and humane
 nature of the Mediator are distinctly known, and also the way
 of redemption, viz. by his death and suffering: It were too
 large a field to speak particularly to these, and in opposition
 to (2) Pelagians of old, and late Socinians, to apply them to
 the several states and conditions of the Church. Only in
 the general, we may affirm, that albeit the mystery of In-
 carnation was some one way or other made known to the
 people of God since the Fall of *Adam*, yet differently, accord-
 ing to the various state and condition of the Church; 1. be-
 fore the (a) giving of the law on mount *Sinai*; 2. under the
 Law; and, 3. under the Gospel; according unto which
 different administrations, there was a different degree and
 measure of knowledge required, since the light of the Gospel
 from time to time did break forth and shine more clearly, till
 the dawning of the day of the Gospel, which we now enjoy,
 1 *Pet.* 1. 10, 11, 12. *Rom.* 16. 25. They who lived before
 the Incarnation, the nearer they were to the morning Star,
 did (as (b) *Aquinas* observeth) see the more clearly.

And then in their disputes, they speak of a twofold necessity. For a thing may be said to be necessary; either, 1. *necessitate precepti*; because it is commanded by him, who can lay an indispensable obligation upon us to obey. Or, 2. *necessitate medii*; because it is a necessary mean, without which the end cannot be obtained, albeit it were not enjoyed by any divine command. Or as (c) *Lugo* speaketh, *Sine quo etiam inculpabiliter commissio non potest haberi salutis*. And whatsoever is thus necessary unto salvation as a mean, must also be necessary because of the command; for that same command that obligeth us to work out our salvation, obligeth us to apply and make use of all the means without which we cannot obtain salvation.

(c) *Lugo loc. cit. scilicet. 1. §. 1.*

Albeit in reference to this distinction the School-men do not agree, some of them maintaining the knowledge of, and faith in Christ, to have been alwayes necessary, as a mean, without which, salvation was impossible; others thinking that this necessity did only flow from the divine appointment and command, requiring this faith in all men. Yet (d) all of them agree in this (which is enough for our purpose) that some measure of the (e) knowledge of Christ was alwayes, either the one way or the other, necessary to salvation. But that these debates do not enervat their joynt testimony for our point, may appear from the concessions of three or four of those, who plead for the least measure of necessity;

(d) *Lombard. 3. sent. dist. 15. Bonavent. Thom. Dionys. Carthus. Scot. Ricard. Gabriel, Pirigian, Durand.*

in magistrum ibid. & Hugo Cavellus in Scotum ibid. Thomas 11. quest. 2. art. 7. 8. Binnaz, in loc. Alent. 3. part. quest. 69, in art. 1. Suarez de fide disp. 12. sect. 3. Valent. ibid. quest. 21. punct. 4. Lug. disp. 12. sect. 4. Hurtad. disp. 44. sect. 1. Lorca. disp. 21. Coninch. disp. 14. dub. 9. Zumel. 12. quest. 89. art. 6. disp. 4. Becan. de vir Theol. cap. 12. quest. 2. Pet. art. 8. Joseph de theol. mer. lib. 3. cap. 5. ref. 3. Medina de rella in Deum. fide cap. 10. Vega lib. 6. in Trident. 1. cap. 22. Javel. 3. part. Christ. phil. tract. 1. cap. 1. Sord lib. 2. de nat. & grat. cap. 11. Canus relect. de sacra. part. 2. quest. 2. Corduba. quest. ar. lib. 2. quest. 5. Sanchez in decal. lib. 2. cap. 5. Summa Tabiena § credere Rametii pambel de fid. cap. 10.

(e) *Albeit (as we observed) some maintain an implicit knowledge to be sufficient,*

such as (f) *Scotus, Bannez, Becanus* and *Lugo*, cited on the margin.

(f) *Quilibet
tamen habens
usum rationis
teneatur pro
aliquando ad
aliquem actum
explicitam
&c.* *Scotus
loc. cit. quest.
3. Fides Christi
fidei explicita
semper fuit*

There is another distinction, which may also be here alleged for clearing the present question, *It is one (g) thing* (saith *Tolet*) *to ask in Christ's name, and another to obtain for his sake, or* (as *Bannez* speaketh) *it is one (h) thing to say, that faith in Christ is necessary to salvation, and another thing to say, that salvation is impossible without Christ.* And in this sense also may that distinction of *Lugo*, which he bringeth from *Augustine*, be understood. *We must*

necessaria in populo fidei necessitate precepti, maxime tempore legis scripta, Bannez loc. cit. § 6. conclusio. Explicita fides mediatoris seu redemptoris semper fuit necessaria ad salutem, tam in veteri quam in novo Testamento, loquitur (inquit) de fide qua fit explicita respectu Mediatoris seu Redemptoris patris, licet non fit explicata respectu divinitatis & passionis ejusdem Mediatoris. *Marith. Becan. loc. cit. § 2. & Joannes de Lugo explicans locum Augustini de civit. Dei lib. 18. cap. 47. loquentis de iis qui olim ex gentibus salvati sunt: Quod nemini (ait August.) concessum fuisse credendum est, nisi cui divinitus revelatus unus Mediator Dei & hominum, homo, Christus Iesus, qui venturus in carne, &c. Dicit postea Augustinus (inquit Lugo) circa questionem de facto, in ea fuisse sententia quod de facto nullus fuisset iustus & sanctus in aliquo statu qui fidem explicam unius Mediatoris non haberet; nam sicut de facto probabile videtur nullum apud Christianos reperiri hominem fidelem & iustum qui aliquid de Christo non audierit & crediderit; sic idem apud Judaeos ante adventum Christi existimari potest: in quibus tam communis erat notitia Messie venturi ac apud nos Christi jam nati. Extra illum vero populum qui fideles erant apud gentes & iusti, vel illuminati fuerunt divinitus per Angelum -- Vel notitiam fidei per homines acceperant; & id fieri non poterat nisi vel quia à Judaeis eam acciperent, vel per traditionem in aliquibus familiis conservatam: At sine notitia Mediatoris futuri fides Judaeorum non communicabatur, qua ex traditione Patriarcharum simul cum notitia veri Dei conservabatur apud eos in quibus conservabantur vera Religio & fides unus Dei, Lugo. loc. cit. § 101. And albeit Thomas doth think, that in some case an implicit faith may be sufficient, viz. supposing some of the Gentiles to have been saved, to whom no revelation of this mystery was made, (which yet he doth not absolutely affirm) and though he say, that these amongst the Jews whom he calleth minores, had but velatam cognitionem de Christo venturo, which he supposeth to be an explicit knowledge of the Mediator, 22 quest. 2. art. 7. ad 3. & in corp. Yet, elsewhere he pleadeth for the necessity of an explicit faith in Christ, as while he maintaineth, that faith, which is necessary to salvation, consisteth in duobus, viz. in vera cognitione Dei, & mysterii incarnationis. 22. quest. 174. art. 6. in corp. And while he affirmeth, that articuli fidei non creverunt quoad substantiam, licet quoad explicationem secundum successionem temporum & vicinitatem ad Christum, 22 quest. 1. art. 7. in corp. & quest. 2. art. 7. item 3. part. quest. 61. art. 3. ad 2. (g) Aliud est petere in nomine Christi, aliud dare & concedere vi & virtute ejus, vel potius ut infra addit, aliud virtute Christi impetrare. *Tolet. com. in Joan. cap. 16. (h) Aliud est fidem Christi esse necessariam, aliud fide Christo non esse salutem vel justificationem, Bannez loc. cit. pag. 192. Conclus. 3.**

(saith he) put a difference between the faith in Christ as the Object, (i) and the faith of Christ as the meritorious cause; or between that faith whereby we know and beleve in him, and the faith which we obtain for his sake and merit, viz, the faith of God as the remunerator of them that seek him; of which Heb. 11. 6. which, saith he, may be supernatural and given for Christ to them who know not Christ; but yet (as we heard) he denieth that ever any obtained salvation by that faith, without the faith and knowledge of Christ as Mediator.

(i) *Alia est fides Christi obiecti seu cui loquimur non cuius (quod) fides Christi causa meritoria, seu quam per Christum accepimus; viz fides explicita unius Dei remuneratoris, quam statuit esse essentiali necessitate modis, propter illud Pauli ad Heb. 11. 6. oportet &c. Et hanc fidem statuit esse supernaturalem & infundit auri propter Christum, quamvis ipse Christus ignoratur. loc. cit. disp. 12. sect. 9 § 108 & sect. 4. § 89 disp. 13 sect. 3 § 52. vid. etiam sect. 1. 2. 3. 5. disp. 12.*

Albeit this distinction may be thus abused and too far extended, yet however it be applied, it cannot make for the Socinian cause, but much against it as to the present case of prayer. We grant that we obtain for Christ many things we do not ask, (and so not in his name) for he doth for us, and giveth to us, exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, Eph. 3. 20. We know not all our wants, nor the mercies we stand in need of; nay the prime and radicall, the most excellent mercies both in nature and grace, both our naturall generation, and spirituall regeneration; our life, and grace which is the life of the soul, are previous to our asking in faith, and yet they are given to us for Christs sake; which Tolet. (k) (though a Jesuit, and it is some-what rare to hear one of that sect to plead for the free grace and bounty of God previous to our works and endeavours) confesseth; adding the testimony of Basil and Clemens, and appealing to experience; but though we may obtain so many things from Christ, and for Christ, which we do not ask in his name, yet unlesse we know him, and beleve in him, and improve his name whensoever we come to the Throne of grace, we receive nothing

(k) *Multa &*

magna Deus etiam non rogatus nec petitus concedit tam temporalia quam spiritalia. bona; doctrina hac est Basil. & Clement. Alex & experientia ipsa confirmatur: quis enim nostrum petiit a Deo animam, corpus & multa alia naturalia? quis petiit ut Christianus fieret? nemo, & tamen obtinuit: & sunt infinita huiusmodi, quae enim non rogatus Deus dat, multo plura sunt quam quae rogatus concedit, Tolet. com. in Joan. cap. 16. tom. 2. col. 192.

What is it to ask in the name of Christ.

(1) Though
they receive be-
fore they be-
lieve, yet as
long as they
must believe
and acknow-
ledge all to
come from him.
(m) Dom. Ban.
nez loc. cit. pag.
191. § 8th an-
tem in hoc.

for his sake; but all our mercies must come to us by a com-
mon providence; such as are not in Christ, and never (1)
shall be engrafted into that noble vine, do receive nothing
for his sake, and therefore there is no ground from this
distinction to think that Pagans who lived and died in the
ignorance of Christ, were saved by his blood; for as (m) *Banner*
(though he doth not affirm that the knowledge of Christ
is necessary, *necessitate medi*) well observeth, the vertue and
merit of Christ is applyed to none but by faith in his name;
Rom. 3. 22, 25, 26, 27, 30. &c. Nay every passage of
Scripture that holdeth out the necessity of faith, (and how
many be these?) do clearly show that all these places which
speak of the impossibility of salvation without Christ, do also
intimat the necessity of knowing and believing in him as *Act.* 4.
12. *Rom.* 5. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21. *1 Cor.* 15. 22. *2 Tim.* 1. 9.
&c. especially, since the Apostle, *Act.* 15. 11. affirmeth, that
by the grace of the Lord Jesus we are saved *even as they*.

I have proceeded further in this argument then I intended,
but I hope it will not be unacceptable to the reader who de-
sireth to know something of the grounds and judgment of the
learned concerning this intricate question; we shall now only
1. point out some scriptures, from which some judicious
divines have, and not without probability might collect, that
if not the whole body of the Jewish church, yet some who
were more eminent for knowledge and holiness, did pray in
Christ's name; 2. we will propound a distinction; and 3.
obviate an objection.

As for the first, these and such like expressions seem to in-
timat that the ancient people of God did tender up their
supplications in the name of the Mediator; as 1. while they
ask of God *for his names sake*, *Psa.* 25. 11. *Psa.* 79. 9. if
we look on *Exod.* 23. 21. where Gods name is said to be in
the angel which did conduct the Israelites, (which angel
was the (n) messenger of the covenant, the promised *Mesa-*
siah) may we not conceive that while they desired to be
heard, for the name of God, they askt for his sake in
whom Gods name (saith (o) *Diodati*) is said to be, be-
cause he is of one essence and glory with the Father? 2.

while

(n) *Mal.* 3. 1.
(o) *Diodati* on
Exod. 23. 21.

while they desire an answer to their prayers for his mercies
 (ake, as *Psa.* 6 4. *Psa.* 109. 26. might they not look to the
Messiah, in whom the bowels of mercy are opened to sinners?
 3. while they plead Gods faithfullnesse and truth, as *Psa.*
 40. 11. *Psa.* 143. 1. did they not plead in his name in whom
 all the promises are yea and amen? 4. While they ask for
Dauids (p) (ake, as *Psa.* 132. 10. did they not rely on him of
 whom David was a type? would they run to the shadow (p) And albeit
 and neglect the substance? especially since the *Messiah* once and they might
 again is called David, as *Isa.* 37. 35. *Ier.* 30. 9. *Eze.* 34. mention the
 23. 24. the truth going under the name of the type; why to David, and
 may we not think that they rather lookt after the typified the kindness
 David, then him who only was the type and figure? 5. shewed to him,
 while they prayed the Lord to hear for his own sake; thus yea and menti-
 the Lord promiseth, (and they accordingly might have pray- on his obedi-
 ed him) to defend Jerusalem, 2 *King* 19. 34. where by way ence and ince-
 of explication is added, and for my servant *Dauids* sake, viz. rity as that
 for him whom David did typifie: thus also we have that same which the Lord
 phrase expounded, 2 *King.* 20. 6. *Isa.* 37. 35. and may not might be pleas-
 he be said to be the Fathers own, who is the brightnesse of them, they be- ed graciously
 his glory and the express image of his person? *Heb.* 1. 3. ing in some
 6. *H Ezekiah* hath his recourse to him as his cautioner and sense his chil-
 undertaker, and David runs to him as his Surety, *Isa.* 38. dren, and be-
 14. *Psa.* 119. 122. their Father,
 and governors
 and so might
 look to the pro-
 mise, *Exod.* 20.
 6. yet they
 could not ask
 for his sake as
 the meritori-
 ous cause. the
 type must not
 thus rob the
 truth of his
 honour.

But you will say, what ever truth may be in such a commen-
 tary upon these places, yet none of them do expressly and
 convincingly hold out the point. *Ans.* 1. It cannot be imagined
 that the Jewes who did see Christ afar off, and whose light
 in comparison of ours was but darknesse, should speak so
 distinctly and expressly of Christ, as we who live in the dayes
 of the Gospel; 2. As of sermons, so of prayers, for the most
 part we have only some brief notes set down in the Scriptures;
 and therefore we may not conclude what was not spoken, thus rob the
 from what is not written: so that if we would know how
 the ancient people of God did tender up their worship to him,
 whether in the name of a Mediator or not; it seemeth a surer
 and better way to survey all the Scriptures of the old Testa-
 ment which speak of his person and offices, then to confine
 our

our inquiry to these few and brief parcells of prayers recorded there. But since so much weight is laid upon an expresse text, let us look on *Dan. 9. 17.* Where the Prophet prayeth thus, *O our God, hear the prayer of thy servants, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy Sanctuary that is desolat, for the Lords sake.* After which manner; and in the same words, we Christians to this day use to pray, while we expresse our dependence upon the merit and intercession of our blessed Saviour, and why should we conceive that *Daniel* using the same words did not expresse the same thing?

Albeit there be, 1. thus so many several expressions in the prayers of the ancient people, which may have relation to Christ; yea, 2. though there be so many clear predictions of his Incarnation, Passion, &c. And, 3. although some eminent Beleevers, might expressly offer up their prayers in his name, yet for ordinary, and as to the body of Beleevers (we need not speak of the rude and carnall multitude, who rested on their outward oblations, and lookt no further then sense could reach.) We think with (q) judicious Divines, that they did not use to expresse the name of Christ, of the *Messiah*, or of the Mediator in their prayers; albeit relying on his merit and satisfaction, they expected to be heard; and thus they did not ask formally and expressly in his name, but virtually and really; and therefore our Lord in that perfect pattern of prayer, which he taught his Disciples, though between (as it were) the Levitical and Gospel way of worship; yet did not enjoin them to ask expressly in his name.

And that place, *Joh. 16. 24.* (which may be objected against their praying in the name of Christ) doth only serve to clear this distinction; for it may be supposed, that Christ there doth not simply deny that his Apostles had askt any thing in his name; could these, who knew him to be the Saviour of the world, draw near to God in any part of worship not relying on him? but he denieth that directly, expressly and by name they had askt any thing for his sake, although after the former manner of worship they had askt in his name; viz. virtually, implicitly under types and shadows. Hence

Cajetan

(q) English
Divines Joh.
16. 24. Tolet
Cajetan ibid
Calvin, Mayer
Diodati &c.

(1) *Cajetan* collects that manner of invocation, (*viz.* expressly in his name) which he prescribed to his disciples a little before his death, and to all the true Israelites to the end of the world, *notum orandi modum*. But though the main scope of that place be to hold out these two different ways of asking in his name; the one formerly followed, the other now prescribed, yet it may rationally be thought, that our Lord there doth also upbraid them for living too much by sense, and that being too much taken up with his bodily presence, they had too much neglected the spirituall improvement of his Mediatorial office. Albeit it seem hard to think that the honest servants of God did not some one way or other look to the Mediator in all their performances, as being typified and represented by all their sacrifices, sacraments, &c. yet according to their measure of faith and light, they did more or lesse rely upon his name, and notwithstanding of that rich opportunity the Apostles had for encreasing their knowledge and faith, yet its certain, that before their master was taken from them, they had attained but to a small measure of both.

But that we may be said truly and really to ask in Christs name, when the habituall intention of our heart doth rest on him; albeit we do not actually think on him, and so cannot mention his name, is manifest from the many petitions in our prayers, to which his name is not annexed, (I know none who use it, neither is it needfull thus at every petition to mention his glorious Name.) and yet none will once question whether all these petitions may be thus presented in his Name, yea and no lesse then these other desires expressly offered in his Name: as true we use to close our prayers in his Name, professing that we ask all for his sake, but before that clause be added, were not (I would ask) the severall petitions put up in faith? otherwise, how could they be acceptable?

Before we proceed to the application, there is a question may be here propounded, *viz.* whether we should ask temporall and bodily things in the name of Christ? for it will not be denied that Spiritualls, which have such a direct tendency unto, and connexion with eternall Salvation (whereof

he is the purchaser & should be asked for his sake. *Ans.* Although this question be not much agitated, yet, I know no Orthodox Divine who doth not suppose that it must be so, and who, by their practice, doth not show their judgment, only (1) *Augustine*, *Gregory* and *Theophilact*, may be some mistaken, as if they did deny, that any thing could be asked in Christ's Name except salvation, and what hath an immediat tendency thereto. But *Augustine* himself sheweth, that he speaketh only comparatively, viz. that all temporal things are not absolutely nothing, but nothing in respect of salvation. And *Gregory* and *Theophilact* do only deny, that Christ can be implored as a Saviour, if we do not seek to him for life and salvation: Yet, for preventing of such a gross error, we shall briefly give some few reasons: *1.* We, in *Adam*, by our manifold actual rebellions, did forfeit our right to all the creatures, and therefore we cannot have a sanctified right and title to them, but in him who in the (2) *buying of all things* gave but all are ours, if we be Christ, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22. and therefore, in testimony of our dependance on him, and our acknowledgement of his purchase and right, we must ask all in his name.

(u) 2 Tim.
4. 8.

2. All the promises (of (u) this life, as well as of that which is to come) in him, are *yes* and *amen*, in him they were made, and in him they have their accomplishment, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. How then can we plead any promise but in his Name; and without a promise we have no warrant to ask, and cannot ask in faith: Nay, I would ask, in whose name do we ask if not in Christ's Name? What can be the title or claim we can pretend, if we be not in him, and ask not for his sake? *Godliness teacheth the promise of the life that now is*; and must not that flow from his blood who is our righteousness and sanctification? 2 *Cor.* 1. 30. Our inherent holiness cannot give us a right to the promise, though it be an evidence and fruit of our being in him, who hath purchased for us a right to all things.

3. Our blessed Lord, in that pattern which he prescribed to his disciples, *Mat.* 6. did teach them to ask temporals, comprehending all those synecdochically under *our daily bread*.

bread; and he required that all their prayers should be trodded up in his Name, *John. 14. 12. 13. John. 16. 26.* adding, no limitation, but on the contrary, extending the promise to whatsoever they would ask; and shall we limit his general grant, and say, that there are some things we may not ask in his Name, and which he will not give nor we obtain for his sake?

4. What we may not ask in faith we should not ask at all, *James. 1. 6, 7.* But our faith can have no rock to stay on but the name of Christ: if we come not to this living stone we cannot offer up an acceptable sacrifice to God, *1 Pet. 2. 4, 5.* Without faith it is impossible to please God, *Heb. 11. 6.* and faith must be toward our Lord Jesus Christ, *1 John. 5. 20, 21.*

5. These outward things being of themselves indifferent, they become instruments and weapons either of sin or righteousness; and therefore, that they may become blessings indeed, and sanctified in the use, they must be askt in his name who is the fountain, and whose Spirit is the efficient of all our sanctification, and the right improving of all our mercies, *Heb. 10. 19. 1 Cor. 10. 4. 1 Thess. 2. 13.*

Here we might resume the reasons brought for the point in the general, and apply them to this particular; we may not draw nigh to God, nor ask any thing from him, but in Christ's name; therefore not temporals.

Is (x) it so? (O friends!) Is God a consuming fire, and we as dry stubble? Hath Christ undertaken, and is he so able and willing to keep us from the devouring flames? What folly and madness were it then in us to draw nigh to God without a Mediator, whom we may interpose between us and divine justice, and who may be a shield to guard us against the frowns and terrors of the Almighty? If so then fifty thousand (y) Benefactors were smitten for looking into the Ark (which was but a symbol of God's presence) if (z) *Israel* durst not look on, nor touch the mount when the Lord did manifest a little of his glory; if thus without a warrant and protection we may not look on God's back parts, nor meddle with the least remnant and token of his presence, and manifestation of his glory, O! how should

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

- (a) Pl. 27. 8. we be afraid to come before his (a) face, and to draw nigh, not the Mower, but the (b) Throne, unless (c) the King hold out the golden Scepter to us; and Christ hath purchased, and still pleadeeth, that the Scepter may be stretched forth to us; there is none in heaven or earth beside him, who can get us access and acceptance; the fountain, that infinit fountain of Gods mercy was stoppt, that not so much as one drop could issue out to sinners, till our blessed Redeemer did lay down an invaluable price, and by his blood did obtain, that the (d) fountain should stand open for washing away sin and uncleanness. And now he hath the keyes in his hand, and offereth water to the (e) thirsty: The door was shut, and the way to the treasure was unpassable, till Christ himself became the (f) door and the (g) way; and now in him, we have access with boldness and confidence, Eph. 3. 12. and, 2. 18. Rom. 5. 2. The people of Israel might not offer sacrifices, but upon the Altar God appointed; and Christ was that Altar, so he is called, Heb. 13. 10. and that other was of no value, but as it did typifie this true Altar: The Altar under the Law did sanctifie the oblation, Exod. 29. 37. Mat. 23. 19. and Christ doth sanctifie our prayers and all our performances: His blood is that incense, the smoke whereof must alwayes ascend, for else our sacrifices cannot be a sweet savour to God, Rev. 8. 3. 4. Eph. 5. 2. Not only Christs sacrifice was an offering to God of a sweet smelling savour, but it also maketh our oblations acceptable, 1 Pet. 2. 5. The typical Altar did sanctifie the gift, but Christ must first sanctifie the Altar; the horns of it must be sprinkled with blood, Exod. 29. 12. and 30. 10. and thus it did ceremonially sanctifie, and typifie the blood of Christ, who through the overruling spirit affixed himself without spot to God, to purge our consciences from dead works, so serve the living God, Heb. 9. 14. O then be thankfull to God for this Altar, and bring all your offerings to it: ye have not far to go, ye are not sent to Jerusalem nor to the Temple, ye alwayes have this Altar at hand: Thou needst not ascend unto heaven, nor descend unto the deep, that thou mayest find it, Rom. 10. 6, 7. thou mayest worship where thou wilt, only in Spirit and

What is it to ask in the name of Christ.

and truth; this Altar alwayes standeth by thee, it filleth heaven and earth, 1 *Tim.* 2. 18. *Joh.* 4. 21, 23. O then I do not dishonour this Altar, do not with Papists, *(b)* erect *(i)* many altars of earth, and forsake this heavenly and golden Altar: but let us rather say with them, *Josb.* 22. 29, God forbid that we should rebell against the Lord, and turn this day from following the Lord, to build an altar besides the altar of the Lord our God; yea, and which is the Lord our God. Remember *Jeroboams* sin and punishment; he would erect new altars, 1 *Kings* 12. 32. and God did put a mark of his displeasure upon him and his posterity. The Lord abhorreth all other altars; none of them can sanctifie the gift; all our performances, though never so specious, if they be not done in Christs name and strength, and washen in his blood, are an abomination to God; though our head were *(k)* waters, and our eyes a fountain of tears; though *(l)* rivers should run down our eyes for our iniquities, though we could pray with the *(m)* tongue of Angels, and diligently follow every duty, yet the Lord would not regard our tears, nor value our service and work.

As Christ is thus our Altar, so he is our Priest, who with his own blood hath purchased liberty to us to enter into the holiest by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20, 21. If any man under the law did offer a sacrifice, and did not bring it to the Priest, that man must be cut off from among his people, *Lev.* 17. 4, 5. Let us remember the judgments of God upon *Saul* for offering sacrifice; and on *Uzziah* for taking a censer in his hand to burn incense; therefore the Lord rejected *Saul* from being King over *Israel*, and smote *Uzziah* with a leprosie unto the day of his death, wherefore he was cut off from the kingdom, and from the house of the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 13. 9, 14. 2 *Chron.* 26. 19, 21. O then let not our hearts be lifted up, (as *Uzziah* was, *ver.* 16.) to our destruction; let us not dare to offer our sacrifice in our own name. Ah! what is our worth, or the worth of our sacrifice? But having such a High-priest, let us draw nigh in his name, with boldness and in full assurance of faith, *Heb.* 4. 14, 16. Though thy hands

were

(b) Papists
institute many mediators
in Christs
room. See
chap. 6
(i) In Christs
nomine gratia
porrigatur,
non in nomine
angelorum,
non in nomine
aliquorum
sanctorum, non
in nomine ip-
sorum pesen-
tium, non in
nomine bono-
rum operum,
sed in Christs
nomine.
nomen, hoc est
non quod
scribitur li-
bris, sed me-
ritum est incar-
nationis, na-
turalitatis, vi-
tae, passionis,
crucis oratio-
nis & mortis.
Simon de
Cassia, lib.
11, cap. 15.
(k) Jer. 9. 1.
(l) Pl. 119.
156.
(m) 1 Cor.
13. 2.

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were clean (as to any grosse defilement) and thy sacrifices without blemish, yet if thou come in thy own strength, the Lord may say to thee, as to that people, *Isa. 1. 11, 12. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices? who hath required this at your hands, thus to tread my courts? Behold the sinner and his sacrifices, but where is the Priest? May I say, as Isaac once askt, where was the Lamb, when he saw the fire and the wood? Gen. 22. 7. Thou drawest nigh to plead for covenanted mercies, and dost not look to Jesus the (n) Mediator of the new covenant; thy sacrifice, like to the popish masse, is an unbloody sacrifice; if thou neglect the blood (o) of sprinklings, the Lord will reject thee: We read of a golden Censer and Altar, and much Incense, that should be offered with the prayers of all Saints, *Rev. 8. 3.* And Christ is that golden Censer and Altar, and his blood the sweet Incense; and what are our sacrifices, all our prayers and tears, of themselves, but (p) *swampy* and loathsome dung, and notwithstanding of these, the Lord will be to us (q) *Esh-velah* and *Eikana*, and we our selves (r) *Lo-ammi* and *Lo-rubamah*; O! but in Christ the Lord is (s) *Immanuel*, and we (t) *Ammi* and *Rubamah*; He, who was to us a consuming fire, will become our God, and have (u) mercy on them, who otherwise could not obtain mercy; and will say to them, who by nature were not his people; thou art my people: And they being in Christ, will say, thou art my God.*

(n) Heb. 12.

(o) *Ibid.*

(p) Phil. 3. 8.

(q) *שן*
לחן
לחן
Deut. 4.

24.

(r) Hof. 1. 6, 9.

(s) *Isa. 7. 14.*

(t) Hof. 2. 1.

(u) Hof. 2. 13.

(x) *Themistocles veterem regis iram metuens, se supplicem praeiit proprium quendam regionis morem sequutus, arripit Admeti parvulo filio cum eo in furnum; quod summi colebatur religione se consecrasset, quod supplicandi genus maximum ac feruissimum antiquam repudiandum Molochi opinionem. Plut. Cher. Grec. & Rom. illi qui in Themistocle Lapa Florent. interpret. pag. (mibi) 118.* May we not think the Lord by this custome among Pagans, would shadow and hold forth to us his tender bowels, to all those who fled for refuge to his Son Jesus Christ.

The famous Athenian Captain, *Themistocles*, being banished by his ingrate Country-men, and flying for refuge to *Admetus*, King of the Molossians, whom he had mocked, and exceedingly irritated, while he had power in the Athenian Commonwealth, and therefore fearing least *Admetus* should revenge that old quarrel, he ran to the sanctuary with the Kings Son in his armes, and thus supplicated the pro-

voked King; which kind of entreaty did alwayes (saith *Plutarch*) prevail with the Molossians, yea, then when all other means did prove ineffectual. Ah I could the Pagan King refuse them nothing, who came with his Son in their *arms*; and shall the King of the Saints reject such as come to him with his Son in their *heart*? Oh! what needs then discourage thee, O disconsolat Saint! Ask whatsoever thou wilt, the King can refuse thee nothing; thou, who hast fled in to his Son and askest in his name, what can thou ask (if good) that will be withheld? *Joh. 14. 13, 14.* what? hast thou many infirmities? he is touched and affected therewith, he sympathizeth with thee, *Heb. 4. 15.* what? is thy condition hopeles and desperate? it is thy unbelief that makes thee think so: for he is able to save to the utmost all that come to God by him, *Heb. 7. 25.* what? art thou poor, blind, naked? what is thy malady? canst thou tell what aileth thee? Harken to glad-tidings, and (y) news that may revive thy fainting soul; thy Redeemer liveth for ever, he is able and willing to save *ἐκ τῶν πάντων*, he will heal all thy diseases.

(y) Though they be of an old date (for the Gospel was preached in Paradise, Gen. 3. 5.) yet they are to this day as sweet, reviving and refreshing, as at the first, they alwayes make anew impression upon the hearts and affections, and so are still new to the longing soul.

Ah I (will the poor sinner say) but my desires are faint and remiss, my prayers cold and formall; and my adresses few and rare, and while I am at work I make litle progresse, I meet with many sad interruptions, many wandring thoughts and diversions, and thus my hopes are cut off; for what good can be expected by the hands of such a lazy and unfaithfull messenger? *Ans.* But though it be thus with thee, though there be much dross mixed with thy gold, and much inequality in thy work, yet Christs gold is pure and without mixture, and thou must trade with his money, thou hast neither price nor money; peny nor peny-worth of thine own, though thou must buy, thou hast nothing of thine own to give; the christian merchandize is a paradox to the world, there was never such a market proclaimed by men as that, *1/a. 55. 1. Rev. 22. 17. &c.* where money-lesse men are invited to come, and buy freely, and the indigent may have a supply of all his wants; though he hath no money to give; yet he may get what he will, yea the poor may there buy gold that he may be enriched, *Rev. 3. 18.*

What

Of the help and assistance of the holy spirit.

What though thou faint by the way, and when thou comest to the well thou hast nothing (as thou thinkest) to draw with, yet if thy thirst continue, thou wilt not be sent away empty; though thou hast not a hand to bring in, yet thou hast a mouth ready to receive; What though thy walk and work be unequall, yet Christs work for thee is constant and equall, without change and interruption, and he makes continuall intercession for thee, *Heb. 7. 25.* what should then discourage thee? if he interceed, must he not prevaile? hath he not moyen and money enough to lay out for all thy wants? shall thy weaknesse and infirmities (but take heed lest rebellions and reigning sins be accounted such) marre his work, and out-cry his blood? he prayeth and interceedeth as effectually for thee when thou art weak and sick, as when thou art stronger, and then lendeth (as it were) a better lift, and will not suffer the work to miscarry for want of thy help: but thou must not mak this a plea for thee to lye by, thou must joyn and concur; his incense must not be offered up alone, but with the prayers of the Saints. *Rev. 8. 3.*

C H A P. I X.

Of the help and assistance of the holy Spirit, of its necessity, and how it may be known, and differenced from Satanicall suggestions, and from that activity and fervency which may flow from the light and conviction of a naturall conscience, sense of wants, &c.

Jud. v. 20. praying in the holy Ghost;

Rom. 8. v. 26. Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the spirit it self (a) maketh intercession for us &c.

(a) *Fit. efficien ter & causaliter, by enabling us to interceed and pray with such fervency as useth to be accompanied with sighs and groanings, as hath been shewn, Ch. 5. sect. 1,*

IT's a strange word which we read, *Phil. 3. 20.* carnall hearts will not beleieve it, they do not know how those

who constantly abide on earth, can be said to have their conversation in heaven. and O I may the trembling sinner say, would to God I might (b) trade with that place; but Ah! the distance is great, and the way unpassable, where shall I find a ladder that will reach the heavens? I cannot move one foot, nor ascend one step towards the Jerusalem that is above, and who will take me by the hand? who can help? what can the weak creature (though willing and ready) do for my assistance? what though I stood upon its shoulders, and though all the power in nature were combined and united together, it could not elevate a sinner above the earth. Nay, but though thou be weak and infirm, and very unfit for such a journey, yet thou hast help at hand, the Spirit is ready to help thy infirmities, and to enable thee to pray, and thus to keep correspondence with, and have thy conversation in heaven; unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. You will say, O noble designe and resolution! but where shall David find a chariot to carry his half dead and heavy heart so far? and by what wings shall he ascend and mount so high? Nay, but hearken, and he will teach thee the way, he takes the right course, he doth not debate nor dispute the question, but by prayer approacheth the Throne, and quickly as with wings ascends to heaven, and gets access, and presents his supplication to the King, *Psal.* 25. 1, 2. &c. *Psal.* 86. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. But yet if David had been left alone, he would have found the distance too great and his legs too weak for such a far voyage; after his fall he missed his guid, and with what importunity did he pray the Lord to uphold him with his free Spirit, and that he would not utterly take away his holy Spirit from him, that his mouth, which for want of the breathing of the spirit for a while was stop't, might be opened again? *Psal.* 51. 12. 11. 15.

What we are now to say concerning the help and assistance of the Spirit, may be comprehended under these three heads.

1. We will bring some reasons holding forth its necessity; 2. We will show how and after what manner the Spirit helpeth us to pray; 3. How the motion of the Spirit may be distinguished.

1. From satanicall suggestions; 2. from the naturall motions

(b) The word
πολιτευμα,
Phil. 3. 20.
may well be
rendered city-
converse, or,
commerce, we
behave our
selves as free
denizens of the
city of heaven,
having free
commerce and
trading with
the place: see
Leigh. Cri-
tie. Sac.

motions of our own spirit, sometimes pressing and drawing us to the Throne; adding a word of application, but reserving severall practicall questions to the cases, Part, 3.

As for the first, The necessity of divine help and assistance, may appear, 1. from our ignorance; 2. from our impotency and inability; 3. from our unwillingnesse and avernesse; and, 4. from God's justice and holinesse, which otherwise would obstruct our access and acceptance.

1. Then we are naturally blind and ignorant, we know not spirituall things, those most excellent and necessary things; nay, they are foolishness unto us, untill the Spirit discover their excellency, and our misery without them, 1 *Cor.* 2. 11, 12, 13, 14. and therefore, without the light and direction of the Spirit, we cannot love and desire them, nor pray for them; what we (c) know not, we cannot love or prize. Yea as to temporalls, we are ready also to mistake, and to ask a (d) serpent in stead of fish; and we are ready to be too peremptory in those foolish destructive desires. We know neither *what*, nor *how* to ask; and therefore we stand in need of the help of the Spirit, that he may teach us to pray as we ought, and according to the will of God, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27.

(c) *Ignorantia cupido.*

(d) *Mat.* 7. 10.

2. As we are thus foolish and ignorant, so we are weak and impotent; nay, dead and without strength, and cannot move one step towards God without his help; untill he (e) blow upon those dry bones, and put a new principle of life into them, and then draw our heavy and dull (though a little quickened and enlivened) hearts up to the Throne of grace, *Eph.* 2. 1. *Rom.* 5. 6. *Ioh.* 6. 44. we are not able and sufficient of our selves to think one good thought, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. nor to speak a right word; *none can* (beleevingly and with affections suitable to such an object) say, *that Jesus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghost*, *Cor.* 12. 3. such corrupt trees as we naturally are, can bring forth no good fruit; *Mat.* 7. 18. unto the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, *Tit.* 1. 15. his heart and conscience being polluted, his best things, his prayers and sacrifices are naught and loathsome, they are an abomination to the Lord, *Pro.* 21. 27. and 28. 9. and therefore un-

(e) *Ezek.* 37. 6.

lesse

Jesse the Almighty stretch forth his arme for our help, we cannot look up to him; we have no oblation which we can offer to him, not a thought or word suitable to his Majesty and greatnesse, and the nature of that heavenly exercise; nay, though we were translated from death to life, yet still we labour under so much weaknesse and infirmity, that we neither know nor are able to ask *what* or *as* we ought, unlesse the Spirit (f) help our infirmities, *Rom. 8. 26.* Prayer is too great a weight for our weak armes to lift, but when we are pulling and tugging to no purpose, then the Spirit cometh, and (g) takes up the heaviest end, and also upholdeth and strengthneth our hands for lifting the lightest, and thus maketh the work sweet and easy to us; the Spirit helpeth (saith (h) Leigh) as the nurse helpeth the little child, who by it self can neither stand nor walk; and thus by the hands of the nurse, taking it by the sleeves, it is inabled to go as she directeth; so weak Saints, &c.

But, 3. as we are thus blind and weak, so we are unwilling, wicked and obstinat; We have much enmity against God, and aversnesse from a communion with him; the carnall mind is enmity (in the abstract) against God and spirituall things, it is not subject to his Law and Ordinances, neither indeed can be, *Col. 1. 21. Rom. 1. 30. Rom. 8. 7.* and how shall this enmity be removed, and the foolish self-destroying posthard be made be made to submit to its maker, and the rebel subject to make his supplication to the King? only the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us can make us yetld, and lay down our weapons, and resolve to fight no more against God; the Spirit of adoption, of enemies can make us sons, and beget filiall affections in us, that we with confidence may draw nigh to God, and call him *Abba Father.* *v. 9, 14, 15. 16. Gal. 4. 6.*

4, Our acceptance and welcom depends upon the help and concurrence of the Spirit; as weare enemies to God, so children of his wrath; haters, and hated of God; walking contrary to him, and he to us, *Eph. 2. 3. Lev. 26. 23, 24. 27, 28. Psa. 18. 26.* O! but the Lord knoweth the mind of the Spirit, and will accept those desires that are breathed d

(f) Συμπληρωματική.
is a metaphors
taken from
him who goeth
to lift a great
weight, which
he is not able
to move from
the ground; and
another stands
over againſt
him, with whom,
joyning hands,
they tak up the
weight toge-
ther. (see Edw.
Leigh in voc.
συμπληρωματική.)

(g) Particula enim cum ad nos laborantes refertur, quorum tamen vis omnis ab eo spiritu proficitur, qui sicut nos penitus oppressos erexit, ita etiam cunctos regis. Beza in Rom. 8. 26.

(h) Leigh loc. cit.

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in the heart by him, *Rom. 8. 27.* The Lord knoweth not our howling and crying, he regards not our tears and prayers, they are an abomination to him, *Prov. 28. 9.* Though all the spirits of just men made perfect, and all the Angels in heaven would joyn with us, yet they could not purchase access to us; *by one Spirit* (saith the Apostle, *Eph. 2. 18.*) *we have access unto the Father*, and there is none beside him, that can obtain an entrance for us: Its true, Christ is the door, *Joh. 10. 7.* but the Spirit must open the door, and get us access, he must take us by the hand and bring us to the Father, and put acceptable words in our mouth; yea, after he hath made our peace with God, and breathed in us the Spirit of life, yet if he do not constantly actuat and quicken that principle, our prayers will want life and heat, and can no more be called spiritual sacrifices then the leuitical offering untill (i) fire (which was of a heavenly descent) was brought from the Altar to burn it: 'Tis true, there may be much fervency and heat, there may be much fire brought from natures furnace, but that common fire is strange fire, though it be brought from our own chimney, yet it is extraneous and unfit for the use; its smoak is loathsome, and a savour of unpleasant smell to God. The strange punishment of *Nadab* and *Abihu* for bringing strange fire to the Lords sacrifices, should be a warning to us; they should have brought sacred fire from the (k) Altar, and not have profaned the ordinance of God with that which was common; *now this sacred fire* (saith (l) *Diodati* on the place) *signified the power of the holy Ghost, by which we can only offer sacrifices acceptable to God*; our sacrifices must be an abomination to God unless we bring a coal from the Altar, and wait upon the breathings of his Spirit to quicken and warm our dead and cold affections. (m) *Fire from heaven on the sacrifice, once was* (saith one) *and yet is a solemn token of acceptance.*

You will say, those who are in the way to conversion, who are lying under some legal preparations, who are looking after God, and advancing some steps towards the kingdom, do often meet with acceptance, though as yet they have not the (n) Spirit of Christ, and are none of his, and so cannot

(i) *Lev. 9. 24.*

(k) *Which should have been always preserved burning, and never go out, Lev. 6. 13.*
(l) *Diod. on Levit. 10. 1.*
(m) *Mant. on Jud. 10.*

(n) *Rom 8. 9.*

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cannot pray in the Spirit; yet their prayers are heard, and their endeavours prove successfull. *Ans.* 1. There is a twofold acceptance, one absolute and illimited, by way of sovereignty, and there is a qualified and covenanted acceptance, by way of gracious transaction and free promise; the Lord out of his absolute sovereignty, may do with his own what he will, and shew mercy to whom he will, and thus accept of persons, and grant their desires, though they cannot lay claim to a promise; but a covenanted and infallible acceptance supposeth an interest in Christ, pleaded at the throne of Grace by the help of the Spirit. But, 2. though such as are seeking after God in a legal way of humiliation, conviction, endeavour, &c. have not as yet the Spirit of Christ dwelling in their hearts yet they have some work and impression of the Spirit on their hearts; though their hearts be not yet renewed and sanctified, yet the Spirit hath a special hand in every step they move towards God, and some special influence upon their heart, which in the event may prove, and so may be called *saving* and *effectual*; since it tendeth that way, and may in the issue prove such. Nay, there is not any excellency in man, or difference (as to the better) of one from another, but it proceeds from the Spirit; and every step towards the kingdom of God, must be ordered and carryed on by him, and the nearer we are brought, the more we owe to the Spirit, and his work is the more eminent and speciall.

As to the second, how doth the Spirit help us? what is that assistance he affordeth to us in praye? *Ans.* There is a common assistance, and there is an assistance peculiarly given to the Saints, and not to others: for it would be (o) remembered, that prayer may be considered, either as a gift common to good or bad, or as it is a grace and sanctified mean for obtaining what we stand in need of, and thus it is proper to the Saints. 1. Then as to the gift of prayer, or an ability and readiness to express our desires (whether real or in shew only) in a fit and decent maner, that must come from the Spirit of God, and be freely given to us, who naturally are (p) destitute, as of the grace, so of the gift of prayer: not only

(o) See ch. 1.
(p) not only
gratia gratum
faciens (as
they speak, but
not properly
if truly) but
also gratia
gratis data, not
only χάρις,
but χάρισμα,
proceedeth
from the Spi-
rit; and the
word, 1 Cor.
4. 7. may be
extended to
every excellen-
cy whereby one
differs from
another.

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only that *extraordinary gift*, whereby in the infancy of th Church some were able upon all occasions, according to the exigence of the hearers, to pray in a strange language, which they never learn't; not only this miraculous gift, immediatly infused by the holy Ghost (which notwithstanding was but a gift, and might be abused, as may appear from, *1 Cor.* 14. 15, 16.) but also the ordinary gift and faculty of expressing our conceptions and desires in apt words, and a decent maner before the Lord (to which our natural parts and industry, our hearing, reading, meditation, conference, &c. do contribute and concur) must be freely given, and proceed from the Spirit of God, as the principal author and efficient: He who filled *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* with wisdom and understanding in all manner of workmanship, *Exod.* 35. 31. and to whom the Plowman oweth his skill in tilling and sowing the ground, *Isa.* 28. 26. 29. must not he stir up in our minds holy thoughts, and fill our mouths with suitable expressions when we come before the Lord? There is here much more then parity of reason; this being a gift for the edification and sanctification of the Church (which is his special work) *though there be diversitiy of gifts* (as to that end, viz. the good and building up of the Church) *yet one and the same Spirit worketh all these, dividing to every man severally as he will,* *1 Cor.* 12. 4, 11. But though thus the gift of prayer proceedeth from the Spirit of God, yet it being a common gift, we cannot thereby be said to *pray in the Spirit*, or *in the holy Ghost*, according to the proper sense of these words, *Eph.* 6. 18. and *Jud.* 20. and as they are used by Christians, for thus they rather signifie the grace, then gift of prayer; and thus the bestowing of this gift, cannot be that assistance, after which we now enquire; there is a mutual separation, for as thus the gift may be without grace, so there may be this gracious assistance without any considerable measure of that gift, as we shew, *Chap.* 1. But so much now of the common assistance of the Spirit, whether miraculous or ordinary.

2. As for that special assistance which is peculiar to the Saints, it is either *habitual* or *actual*, 1. Then habitual grace, that seed of God and principle of life, (the soul of the

the new man) is necessary to prayer, as to every spirituall performance; a dead man cannot move, and naturall life is no more necessary to vitall actions, then the life of grace to every spirituall action; the tree must be made good, else it cannot bring forth good fruit, *Luk. 6. 43, 44, 45. Mat. 12. 33.* we cannot pray in the spirit till we have received the spirit of adoption, we must be, (I do not say we must know that we are) *Sons*, before we can truly and in faith call God *Father*. The Spirit doth not infuse prayer in us as he doth the habits (or rather faculties) of grace and life, without our activity and concurrence; prayer is not (as (q) Familists fondly dream) so the work of the Spirit, that it is not our work also, the Spirit doth not pray in us or for us, but helpeth us to pray for our selves (r) συναρτιλαμβανεται, *Rom. 8. 26.* he concur-
 reth and addeth his assistance to our work, which subjectively is terminated in us, and denominats us; and can we work without strength, and untill first an active principle of life be breathed into us? hence Interpreters by the phrase 'praying in the spirit, *Eph. 6. 18.* do affirm to be held forth both the Spirit of him who prayeth, (*viz.* the new nature which frequently is so called in the Scripture) and the Spirit of God which helpeth and assisteth us in that work.

But though habituall grace be thus so necessary, yet it is not sufficient; its true the Spirit of regeneration is alio the Spirit of supplication, therefore these two are conjoynd in the promise, *Zeck. 12. 10.* A gracious soul must pray, there is no blind nor dumb children in Gods family, all of them as they must look up to their Father, and depend on him; so they must speak to him, and lay out their wants and necessities before him: but yet there is not such a inseparable connexion, but there may be and often is a separation; a gracious heart at some seasons and occasions, may want the assistance of the Spirit when he would draw nigh to God, so that he may pour out naturall and carnall desires, yea and when as, to the matter, the desires are spirituall, yet they may be so weak and faint, so remisse and destitute of that life, that attention, high estimation, fervency, seriousness, &c. which the quality and worth of the object, and the nature of that
 solemn

(q) Teand An-
 nomians also,
 according to
 Pagits cata-
 logue of their
 errors; here fi-
 og. pag. 110.
 Where they are
 said to affirm
 that all graces
 are in Christ
 and none in
 us, so that
 Christ belee-
 ves Christ
 loves &c. and
 so they agree,
 with familists
 in denying our
 concurrence.
 (r) Una sub-
 levoit, Bez.,
 adjuvat, vul-
 gata; auxilia-
 tur Erasmus,
 una capessit
 Scapula in voc.
 λαμβανω
 particula ου
 at nos laboran-
 tes refertur
 Bez.

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solemn and heavenly exercise requireth, that it were a great indignity to the holy Ghost to father such prayers upon him. While then the pious and learned Mr. (f) *Baxter*, saith, *He beleeueth there is never a prayer that ever a Beleever did put up to God for things lawfull and usefull, but it was put up by the help of the Spirit.* I would think this judicious Divine doth not speak univerſally of all prayers put up by Beleevers, but only of all such prayers as have some life and seriousness in them, some measure of attention, &c. which are the proper effects of the Spirits assistance; and while the Lord is thus (t) *called upon in truth*, though there be much weakness and manifold infirmities; yet (I grant, and this may be all that this Author aimeth at) that the Lord in mercy covereth, and for Christs sake pardoneth these imperfections, and accepteth the duty. Yet there may be such carnal ends, such deadness, indisposition, and want of attention, that the beleever, after he hath done, cannot give an account what he hath askt, at least as to some petitions; and it were very grosse to affirm, that such prayers were put up by the help of the Spirit, there being nothing of that life, truth and other qualifications, which alwayes accompany the Spirits work and assistance. And with what shame and confusion do Beleevers many a time come from the Throne, while they reflect upon their work, and the dishonour they have done to God for taking his name thus in vain, and profaning such a solemn ordinance, through their negligence, and giving way to carnal and distracting thoughts? and such (u) prayers cannot be said to contain good desires; for where there is no attention and seriousness, there no desire can be kindled, enlivened and sanctified; and so though the matter were never so good and excellent, yet the prayer must be naught.

So much for the habitual assistance which is pre-supposed as some thing previous unto, rather then implied by, *praying in the spirit*; yea, this assistance is only *mediat* and *remote*, as to the duty it self; and hath no (x) influence upon it but by its effect, *viz.* that principle which was at first infused, and is still preserved by the Spirit; and which being actuated by

(f) Mr. Baxter, meth. for a settled peace of conscience, disc. 19. doub. 9.

(t) Pl. 145. 18.

(u) An objection from that author obviated.

(x) Except in that sense in which Physicists affirm, that *gravia & levia moventur à generante*, Tolet. 8. phys. quæst. 2. Coënimbr. Ruvi. ibid. cap. 4. quæst. 2. Suar. metaph. disp. 18. sect. 2.

by the spirit, doth concur with the Spirit in all our spirituall performances.

3. Then that assistance which directly and properly is held forth by the help of the Spirit, must be some *actual* influence and work upon the soul, and concurrence with it in it's actings; which we may branch forth in these few particulars, and speak of a four-fold act of the Spirit by way of actual assistance, (beside that constant and continual supply and influence, whereby the new man and weak principle of life is conserved and supported against the mighty assaults of old *Adam* within, and the strong man without.) 1. To *actuat* and *exuscitat*. 2. To strengthen and corroborat. 3. To instruct, direct and regulat. And, 4. to encourage, embolden, and make us draw nigh to God with confidence. 1. Then, the Spirit exciteh, quickneth and bloweth up the (x) fire; though there be a principle of heat within, yet the spirit must blow upon these coals and dispell the embres before they will burn; the habits of grace do stand in need of quickning and stirring up, otherwise they cannot act, they lose their vigor and activity; unless the Spirit *draw us we will not run*, Cant. 1. 4. Unless the wind blow upon our garden, the spices thereof will not flow out.

But, 2. we must not think that we stand in need of no more but of this quickning and exciting motion, as if the man were strong and able enough to walk, if once awakned; nay, unless the Spirit concur and assist, unless he bring furniture and provision, and put new strength in us, the work will be marred; though he did set us upon our feet, we would quickly go to the ground and fall asleep again; though you would draw a paralitick man after you, yet he could not follow; though you did lift him up, yet he would instantly fall back again, unless you would add strength to his muscles and joints: but I said, that the Spirit must not only concur, but also strengthen and corroborat, the spirit must supply our weakness and inability. So that here we may take notice of a twofold act; 1. to *concur* with the new man, according to the measure of its strength and activity; 2. since the new creature is weak and not able to go of its self, the nurse must take it by

the knees and uphold it: we have not a sufficiency in our selves for one good thought, 2 Cor. 3. 5. If the Lord hold not up our goings in his paths, our feet would quickly slip. Ps. 17. 5. If his right hand did not uphold us, we could not follow after him, Ps. 63. 8. There being, 1. from within so much weakness; and, 2. so much indisposition and deadness; yea, and, 3. so much contrariety, opposition and enmity, the flesh continually lusting and warring against the spirit (and though there were no more, this last were enough to render us unable to do, Gal. 5. 17. The old man waxing strong, proveth a tyrant, and often binderth the new man hand and foot, and leadeth him captive to the law of sin, Rom. 7. 23.) Nay, and, 4. From without, many and subtle snares and tentations from the world. And, 5. mighty and strong assaults from the (1) strong-man, that (2) roaring Lyon Sathan, continually laying siege to the soul, and storming it with fierce and fresh assaults from time to time; so that we must not, with Pelagians and (a) Arminians, think that the Spirit doth concur with, and assist us in our spiritual performances, according to that concurrence that is given to natural agents in their operations; for they have a sufficient and compleat power and ability in their own rank and order for doing their works, and producing their several effects, though as creatures, they be indigent and dependent both in being and working, *in esse & operari*. As the infinite arm of the Almighty must uphold them, otherwise they must instantly vanish and return to their mother *nothing*; that womb from which they did come; so that same arm of divine providence must help them, and concur with them, otherwise they can do nothing: But yet a general concurrence and common work of providence, is sufficient to (b) *actuat* and assist them; they being in their own kind compleat agents, and sufficiently thus proportioned for their several works and operations. But the new man is a weak creature, and hath no strength of himself to walk, he is an incomplete agent, and not able to work, unless he get a continual supply of strength from heaven, not only to actuat and assist the little strength and activity he hath, but also to compleat and perfect the principle and

(y) Luk. 11.

21.

(z) 1 Pet. 5. 8.

(a) Though
Jesuits and
Arminians
admit a moral
perfection and
some illumination
of the mind
and understanding,
yet they deny any
power and
strength to be
communicated
and imparted
to the will and
executive
faculties.

(b) V. z. to
actuat deter-
minando, and
to assist con-
currendo.

and fountain; unless new water be put, into our cisterns, there can no water be drawn from them; and therefore the Spirit doth not only actuate and concur, but also supply the weakness, impotency and defect of the cause it self, in all our spiritual actions. And particularly as to prayer, both in reference to innate weakness, indisposition, blindness, opposition, &c. and to outward tentations and assaults, there be several things which the Spirit doth perform; and to speak now to the present point of corroboration and assistance, as distinguished from the two following, viz. the illumination and imboldning of the soul (which also belong to this general head of supply and help, but for distinctions cause, shall be handled by themselves) we shall now here speak of that common, and (as I may call it) *accidental* supply, which though it be required for the further perfection of the work, yet is not necessary for its prevalency and acceptance, as variety and plenty of matter, decent and apt expressions, and what else belongs to prayer as a gift; of which we have already spoken. But we shall now speak of the proper and more necessary supply, whereby the Spirit doth provide and furnish help and assist the soul to all these (c) requisites and gracious qualifications to which the promise is made, and which may promote the efficacy and acceptance of prayer. And though none of these be common, and no crumb of this bread (which is the childrens allowance) be at any time casten to the dogs, all of them being spiritual and good of themselves, yet some of them are more essential and necessary then others; and in all of them there is a latitude, some having the soul a greater measure and degree, then others; yes, one and the same supplicant may now find them in a greater, and afterwards in a lesse measure and gradual perfection: but we will not now stay on a comparison, nor enquire what qualifications are necessary to the acceptance of prayer, what not, but committing that question to *Part. 2. chap. 33* we shall now speak to the point; and since the qualification of prayer as of every duty may be measured, 1. by the object, 2. by its end and principles; and, 3. by its manner of performance; so we shall consider prayer under all these respects and relations. *Alexander de sp. S. apud*

(c) Spiritus sanctus non solum docet, sed etiam movet & movet; docet rationem, movet memoriam, & movet voluntatem; docet ut sciamus, (ut geris ut velimus, roborat ut possimus Gerhard. barm. evang. con. cap. 76. Illuminat mentem hominis ad intelligendum, voluntatem inflammat ad amandum, & virtutem ad robur praestat. ad exequendum, Dyd. Alexandr.

Then as to the matter and object of prayer, though we have some gift of apprehension and fancy, whereby we may find variety of matter, yet unlesse the Spirit illuminat the understanding, and make a discovery of the excellency and expediency of fit objects, how ready are we to mistake? as shall be shown in the third particular. But here we would show how the Spirit upon that discovery, determines the will to close with and make choyce of fit objects, and having thus enflamed the heart with love to spiritual objects, and moderated our thirst after the creature, he sends us to the throne with suitable desires, and enableth us to ask what is good for us and agreeable to the will of God, *Rom. 8. 27.* Secondly, as to the ends and principles, we will not separate these two, because we are not now speaking of *physical* principles, but of *moral*, viz. those motives which *per modum finis*, do attract and draw alongst the heart, and allure it to the duty: especially those three, which we find conjoynd, *1 Tim. 1. 5.* (where also they are called τὸ τέλος τῆς παραγγελίας, the end of the commandment, and may also be called the end of our obedience, endeavours and performances, which are so many evidences and fruits of, and means to strengthen them) viz.

(d) Ἀγάπη. *faith, (d) love and conscience* of our obligation, and the duty we ow to God, both by way of *debt*, as his creatures, and *gratitude*, as his favourites and objects of his love and bounty, and this our obedience becometh not a task, a hard or unpleasant service and work, especially since, further, it is sweetened by *love*; and, 2. by the expectation of a new reward, whereof *faith* is an assurance; and it is the work of the Spirit of God to purifie our hearts by *faith* and *love*, *1 Tim. 1. 14. Eph. 6. 23.* and to sprinkle them from an evil conscience by the blood of Christ, (e) *Heb. 10. 21.*

(e) See Dio-
dat. on the
place.

As to that which more properly and principally is called, and should be the last and ultimat end of all our prayers and performances, viz. the glory of God, it is above the reach of corrupt nature to aim at such a noble mark, but every one, while in that state, must (with them, *Phil. 2. 21.*) seek their own, and not the things of Christ: Ah! our ease, honours, pleasures and wealth, naturally are our idols, these are our great

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great end, and we cannot desire or ask any thing from God, unlesse with a design to (f) consume what we receive upon our lusts; and thus we are too apt to desire God to help us to sin against him, to put a weapon in our hand, whereby we might fight against him, and to provide fewel for our lusts, (g) which are set on fire of hell. Nay, self is the last and (g) great aim of our most refined desires of grace and glory, untill the Spirit purifie our affections, and elevate them to a more high and noble end. and enable us to obey the exhortation, 1 Cor^o 10. 31. and honestly to seek the glory of God, and to propose it as our scope in all our actions and performances, doing whatsoever we go about heartily as to the Lord, and not to men (whether our selves or others) Col. 3. 23.

3. As to the manner, what, 1. reverence, 2. tenderness, 3. importunity, 4. fervency, 5. watchfulness, 6. sincerity, &c. is in our prayers must (b) come from above; our barren ground cannot yield such fruit: what cold and dead performances, what loathsome and abominable sacrifices have we to offer to the Lord, untill the Spirit of Christ (who is our life, Col. 3. 4.) breath in some life and heat into our (i) affections? those who have the naked gift, but want the Spirit of prayer; though they may have matter enough and plenty of words, yet they want a heavenly desire, which is the soul of prayer; there is meat enough before them, but they want an appetite; there are bullocks and rams enough for sacrifice, but where is the fire? a lifeless carrion is not such an object of pity, as a dead formal prayer. I do not deny, that (k) Balaam may (l) desire to dye the death of the righteous; carnal men may have some velleities and wouldings, some lazy languishing and selfish desires after grace and happiness, but no man ever did, or is able, without the help of the Spirit, to come to the length of, 1. a permanent and habi-

(b) Quia autem perfectioris voluntatem adimplere, ac si diceret tantum esse pigritiam tantumque frigus carnis nostrae, ut rite orare nemo queat nisi spiritu Dei excitatus; nam hinc sollicitudo, hinc ardor & vehementia, hinc alacritas, hinc fiducia, &c. Calvin in Jud. 20.

(i) When the Spirit comes, it is a time of life, the Christians affections spring in his bosom at his voice, as the babe in Elizabeth at the salutation of the Virgin Mary, or as the strings under the musicians hand stir and speak harmoniously, so do all the saints affections at the secret touch of the Spirit. Gurn. spir. arm. part. 3. pag. 580. (k) Numb. 23. 10. (l) Every desire of grace is not spiritual and saving, nor an evidence of grace.

What it is to ask in the name of Christ.

ruall, 2. an operative, efficacious and prevailing over corruption, vigorous and restless till it be satisfied, and 3. a pure and spirituall desire of grace and holynesse, of Christ for himself, because of his excellency, of a crucified and persecuted, of a naked and despised Christ, of holynesse because of its beauty and conformity to the Law and will of God; Nay, but there was so much drosse in the best refined desires and prayers of the most Saint-like formalist as did not only obscure but consume the Gold, so that the most expert artist was never able from thence to extract the least grain that could abide the trial; though alas! there be too many mountebanks, and boasting chymists who therewith are deluded, and would cozen the world with such brasse and counterfeit mettall; with the shadow in stead of the substance, condemning all these as too precise who do not think such coyn good enough for carrying on a trade with heaven and for eternity.

Thus the blessed Spirit worketh suitably to his name, and maketh us in some measure (m) conformable to his own image, he *Spiritualizeth* our carnall, earthly and selfish desires; (n) Coloss. 3. sires; or rather, in stead of these, doth (n) creat in us new and heavenly affections, which being offered up to God are (o) 1. Pet. 2. 5. our spirituall Sacrifice, and therefore (o) acceptable to God through Jesus Christ: they are *spirituall*, not only in respect of the principall *efficient*, the holy Spirit, and, 2. in respect of the *subject* a renewed spirit put in us; but also, 3. in respect of the *object*; 4. in respect of the motive, principle, and end; and, 5. in respect of the manner of performance.

Now we come to third act of the Spirit whereby he enlighteneth the blind eye, and regulates, directs and pointeth out the right object of our desires; ah! we know not what to ask, we are ready to ask a stone instead of bread, till the Spirit come with his help, and teach us to ask what is good and expedient for us, and agreeable to the will of God, Rom. 8. 26, 27. Unless the Spirit, 1. anoint our eyes, that they may behold and discern; 2. present the object, 3. manifest and discover its beauty and excellency; and, 4. stay our wandering eye and hold it to the object, nor suffering it to stray and slip; we will not think on spirituall things, nor are we able to contemplat

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contemplant their excellency, and so they will not become imitable and desirable to us; and though we get a slight view of them, yet we soon weary in beholding such an Object, till the Spirit stay our unstable spirits, and make us ponder more seriously, and still presse the honey-comb till it drop sweetness; unlesse the Lord be our pilot and guid, unlesse he direct and order our thoughts, we neither know *what* to desire nor *how* to ask: What need have we then, with the Apostle, 2 *Thef.* 3. 5. to pray that the Lord would *direct our hearts* not only unto the love of God, (which is one of the particulars there instanced) but also to the love and desire of every thing whereby our communion with God may be promoted, and our happinesse in enjoying of him for our portion, may be secured, and evidenced to our hearts.

4. The Spirit fills the heart with reverentiall boldness and confidence in his addresses to God; the sense of guilt may make the holiest saint on earth (with *(p)* *Adam*) be afraid of God, and tremble at his presence: O! but the Spirit removeth that terror and dread; and saith to the fugitive and trembling sinner (what Christ by an audible voyce to the paralytick, *Matt.* 9. 2.) *Son be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee*; and if thou be a *Son*, what needs discourage thee? *if a child, then an heir, an heir of God, and joynt heir with Christ*, *Rom.* 8. 17. and so you may ask what you will, it will be given to you; will the Father withhold any part of the portion from the heir? or needs the son be afraid to draw nigh to his kind Father? Thus the Spirit of adoption, by discovering and witnessing our relation, doth enable us to come with, 1. boldnesse; 2. confidence; and, 3. importunity, crying (which is a token as of seriousnesse, so of boldnesse and who but the Kings son and child dar cry in his presence?)

(*q*) *Abba* (which sheweth the familiarity and confidence, word signifying Father, coming from the hebreu *Ab* from which it only differeth in the termination; it may be thought strange, that the learned Augustin did herein so grossly mistake as to say, that *Abba* was græcum Vocabulum, August. *epist.* 178. where we have his dispute rather then an epistle) with *Pascensius the Arrian*, *Laurentius being arbiter*,

(h) *Gen.* 3. 10.

(q) *Abba* is Syriack

(which

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which every son hath not the liberty to use ; but must make choyce of another kind of compellation, importing greater distance and reverence *Abba, Father*) thus doubling the word to be an evidence of fervency and importunity, *Rom. 8. 15. Galat. 4. 6.*

Its true, this confidence and boldnesse admitteth a latitude, but every step and degree of it must come frome the Spirit, by whom only we can have accessse, *Eph. 2. 18.* and therefore that accessse, with any measure of boldnesse and confidence mentioned, *Ch. 3. 12.* But though it must come from the Spirit, yet not alwayes by that witnessing act, whereby he testifieth to our Spirits, that we are the sons of God, *Rom. 8. 16.* but by applying other grounds, and making some sort of confidence arise from thence ; as, 1. Sense of our need and wants will banish shame and fear, yea and sometimes modesty, *necessitas non habet legem*, necessity shakes off all bonds; it made those lepers, *2 Kings, 7. 3, 5.* venture to go to the camp of the Syrians, and *Esther* go to the King with her life in her hand, *Esth. 4. 16.* Extreameity will make a dumb man speak: will it not open a mouth morally shut, while once it opened the mouth of *Crasus* son which nature had closed? I am ashamed to beg, saith the unjust steward, while he lived in abundance, *Luk. 16. 13.* but stay till he was stripped naked of all, and he can see no remedy, his (r) extreameity would banish away his shame. If the conscience were once awaked (as in the Saints) to see our guilt and misery, and our need of Christ, though we wanted the immediat light of Gods countenance, and manifestation of his favour, yet would we venture and go boldly to the Throne, resolving if we should perish to perish (if it were possible) there. This is the first and lowest step, and rather of our *boldnesse to pray*, then *boldnesse in prayer*: which may, 2. be promoted from the *sense of our obligation*, flowing from the command: conscience of duty may pull, and strongly draw us to the throne, (in obedience to him who hath commanded us to call upon him and pay him this homage) though we be not assured of the successe of our work; But, 3. and more properly, this boldnesse may arise from *hopes of successe*, which though grounded upon

(r) *Durum
selum necessi-
tas.*

upon *certainities*, viz. the command of him, who never said to the seed of *Jacob*, seek ye my face in vain; his gracious attributes, his mercy, compassion, forbearance, &c. his invitations, intreaties, expostulations, promises, threatnings and judgments upon the disobedient, who will not call upon his name; the success that others have met with, &c. Though the soul doth not doubt of these in the general, and as to others, yet as to thee (while thou sittest in darkness, and wants the light of assurance flowing from the inward testimony of the Spirit) these can only beget a *probable hope*, and thereby raise up the heart to a proportionable boldness and confidence, banishing slavish fear, despondency of spirit, and such discouragements as may draw off the heart, or weaken the hands: and thus, 1. *negatively*, (viz. by removing obstructions) the foundation-stone of confidence is laid: 2. and *positively*, enlivening and quickning the soul by a rational expectation of success.

But betwixt this *probable hope*, and that *πληροφορία πιστης*, the full assurance of faith, Heb. 10. 22. There is a middle and third kind of confidence, arising from divine argumentation; the Spirit breathing upon, and sealing all the propositions of the practical Syllogisme, but especially the *minor*, by discovering to us the reality and sincerity of our graces, and thus enabling us to assume and say, I love and fear God, keep his commandments, &c. From which (supposing the knowledge & faith of these general discoveries held forth in the *major*) the conclusion concerning our state and condition doth clearly and necessarily flow. You will say, if the conclusion do clearly follow, it must beget as full an assurance as the immediat testimony of the Spirit. *Ans.* We will not now compare the immediat and direct irradiation and evidence of the Spirit, with the mediate and argumentative reflex by a practical Syllogism, in which the word is applied, and from thence a conclusion drawn concerning our state and condition; or compare (as I may speak) the Spirit's *witnessing to our spirit*, and (s) *bearing witness to our spirit*. But to the question, (1) Rom. 8. 16. we grant, that a great measure of confidence and boldness may be had both wayes; and whensoever the soul can say,

with her, *Can. 6. 3. I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine*, by whatsoever means this assurance be attained, he may draw nigh to God in full assurance of faith, grounded upon this particular interest in him; but often, by reason of the small measure of irradiation from the Spirit, the assent given to the *minor* is so weak, that it differeth not much from a meer *opinion*, having much fear and jealousy mixed with it, so that albeit an assent be given to the assumption, yet *cum formidine partis opposita*; and thus the conclusion, as the effect, must be in part tainted with that imperfection, as of the cause; and so cannot be the foundation of such a measure of confidence and boldness, as might arise from a clear evidence and full assurance. But here there is a great latitude, concerning which we shall now say no more, but that if there be such a measure of assent, as doth banish and calm the storm & boisterous winds of despair, distrust, unquietness, anxiety, &c. and doth carry the soul to trust and stay it self upon God, and to adhere, rely and depend upon him and his free grace in Christ, held forth in the promises, adventuring soul and all upon it, this may prove a sufficient ground of acceptable confidence and boldness which will prevail, and will not be sent away from the throne of grace empty.

Here we may reach a word, 1. to the proud Pharisee; 2. to the mocking Acheist; 3. to the disconsolate; 4. to the enlivened and strong Saint.

First then, from this point, I may reach a rebuke to him, who, presuming on his parts and eloquence, or (with that boasting hypocrite, *Luk. 18. 11.*) on his own worth and goodness, doth think that he hath at home provision enough for the work, and so mindeth not, neither seeketh help from above, but dare draw nigh to God in his own strength. Ah! what doth the Almighty regard the acting of parts, and the moving of the tongue, though with much art and elegance? He knoweth the mind of the Spirit, the meaning of the least sigh and groan poured out in his strength, *Rom. 8. 27. 28.* but will not acknowledge or hearken to the voice of thy Spirit; it is too weak (whatever conceit thou mayest entertain concerning its might and excellency) to wrestle with, and overcome

overcome the Almighty ; but (r) worm *Jacob* was strong, he got power from above, and in it he wrestled with God, and at length prevailed and carried the day, *Gen.* 32. 25. he prevailed by weeping and supplication, *Hos.* 12. 4. What strange weapons were these for a conquerour ? and durst the possessor strive with his Maker ? (the Angel of the covenant appearing in a created shape) *Ans.* Yes, the Lord alloweth us to fight and wrestle with such weapons, *Ἰωαννῆς* *Col.* 4. 12. to strive, as it were, in an agony, and not to faint nor give over till we get the victory : Nay, but we must not dare to wrestle with God but by his own strength, *Deus in Jacobo fuit seipso fortior*, God did lend *Jacob* more strength then he did fetch against him ; he did, saith (u) *Calvin* uphold *Jacob* (and continually upholdeth the Saints in all their tryalls and combats) with the right hand, and fought against him only with the left. But you will say, *Jacob* is said by his strength to have power with God, *Hos.* 12. 3. *Ans.* There can be (as (x) *Calvin* saith) no better title then donation, what strength the Lord out of his free mercy had bestowed on *Jacob* during the combat, was *Jacobi* strength, the Lord had freely given it to him, and doth allow that it be called his : O ! but there is no prevailing over the omnipotent, but by his own strength ; if thou draw nigh to him in thy pride, thou mayest fear his hand ; he resisteth the proud and will not yield, he is angry with them, and they shall not be able to stand before him.

Secondly, A word to the blasphemous Atheist, who dare mock the Spirit of God, rather then the Saints, while he upbraideth them with having, and being led by the Spirit ; and if any infirmity be espied in such, that must be reckoned in the

(r) *Isa.* 41. 14

(u) *Dicitur ergo Deus vincti a nobis quando virtute spiritus sui nos confirmat & reddit in expugnabiles, imo facit ut triumphum agamus de scituationibus, & si singula reputamus talis est tunc portio, ut Deus majorem partem suae virtutis a parte nostra habere velit, & tantum sumas partem magis*

infirmam ad nos sentandos vel experiendos--atque si Jacob suo Marte pugnesset non poterat ferre umbram ipsius Dei. quin consideres, redactus fuisset in nihilum nisi opposita fuisset major virtus quam hominis, hanc similitudinem (inquit) adducere soleo quando loquor de iustitia & quotidianis certaminibus quibus Deus exercet pios, quod pugnet nobiscum sinistra manu, & quod nos tucatur dextra sua, &c. Calvin. comment. in Hos. 12. 3. 4. (x) Nullus est melior titulus quam donatus ut vulgo dicunt, & Deus solet in nos transferre quicquid consultis ac si nostrum esset; distinguere ergo prudenter necesse est hic inter virtutem hominis quam habet a seipso (id est a natura) & eam quam Dominus in ipsum transfudit. Calv. ibid.

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first place amongst the works of the Spirit. Its true, there is a generation of vile deluded sectaries, who father all their wicked and enormous actings upon the holy Spirit; I plead not for such monsters, let them bear their own just punishment, ignominy and reproach; but for any upon this pretence, to mock and flout humble self-denied and circumspect Christians, who dare not brag of their having the Spirit, but labour to maintain and prize his presence, and to bring forth these fruits of the Spirit, mentioned, *Ephes. 5. 9. Gal. 5. 22.* these mockers do evidence, that they have not Spirit; for if they had, they durst not make a jeer of having it, and if thou hast not the Spirit of Christ, thou art none of his, *Rom. 8. 9.* thou art a dead man, the sentence of death is already past upon thee, and thou art destitute of the Spirit of life, *ver. 13. 10.* and thy mocking the Saints is, as if the dead could mock the living, because they do live and have a principle of life: I will not say, with a learned (y) Divine, that to mock the Spirit, and to attribute his work (as the Pharisees did Christs) to the devil, is that unpardonable sin against the holy Ghost, but certainly it is near in kin to it; and from thence our blessed Lord took occasion to speak of that sin, *Mat. 12. 31, 32.* compared with *ver. 24.* and let such mark, that this unpardonable blasphemy is there called, *speaking against the holy Ghost.* O! but all those, *who live in the Spirit walk in the Spirit, Gal. 5. 25.* let the fruits of the Spirit appear in your conversation, let your *goodness, righteousness and truth* (x) stop the mouth of mockers; dare ye also reproach his holy name, all the blasphemies of Atheists do not so much (a) *plus* the blessed Spirit (as it were) *to an open shame,* as the miscarriages of the Saints; and these often prove, and are called, *2 Sam. 12. 14. a great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.*

(y) Mr. Bix.
scr.

(x) Eph. 5. 9.

(a) Heb. 6. 6.

(b) Zech. 9.
32.

Thirdly, Rejoyce, O ye (b) prisoners of hope, cast off your fears and complaints, and do not say my sins are so many, my deadness and indisposition for duty so great, and my spiritual enemies so strong and fierce, that my hope is cut off, I have no strength to wrestle with such mighty adversaries, and to remove such great mountains of impediments,

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ments. I grant, if thou wert *helpless*, thy condition were *hopeless*, but all thine enemies are not able to stop the way, and to intercept thy supplie from heaven : what though creature-help did fail, what though those pools were dried up, yet thou mightest run to the full fountain ; the Lord himself is thy helper, his Spirit will strengthen and support thee, no bonds nor prison can hold out, all the power of men and devils cannot drive away the Christians guard or disarm him ; if he can pray, he shall not want help to, and by that work, the spirit will help him to pray, and in answer to his prayer, will give what else he stands in need of ; and do not say, ah ! but I cannot pray ; for though thou canst not of thy self, yet thou hast help at hand ; the Spirit is ready to *help thine infirmities*. We shall speak of the means for recovering and maintaining the quickning and assisting presence of the Spirit in the cases, *Part. 3.* But now let me only enquire, hast thou not a heart to desire and ask his presence and help ? If thou hast not such a desire, why dost thou complain ? and surely thou art unworthy to receive, and unfit to entertain such a guest ; but if thou desirest, and wilt ask, what needst thou fear, *will not your heavenly father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him ?* Luk. 11. 13. O ! what an excellent master do we serve, who, as he sets us a task, and appoints our wages, so also he gives strength to perform : He will enable us to work, and then reward our labour.

Fourthly, All ye, who live under the breathings of the Almighty, ye on whom the Sun doth shine, and who are warmed and refreshed with its pleasant beams, take heed lest ye sin away this great mercy and privilege ; *(c)* ye are not of the night, why should darkness surprize you ? an eclipse may prove terrible and dangerous to you. The office of the Roman *(d)* *Vestals*, chiefly was to keep in the sacred (as was supposed) fire, which if let out, they were driven into a dark corner, stripped naked, and scourged for their negligence : and you, who are *(e)* *chast virgins to Christ*, are called to maintain the heavenly fire, and if through your negligence it be quenched, you will be left for a while in the dark, and *(f)* messenger of Sathan may be let loose to buffet you ; especially

(c) Thes. 5. 5.

(d) Plurarch
cher. grec.

Rom illust.

vis in Num.

Pamphil pag.

(mih) 44.

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Camell. pag.

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(e) 1 Cor.

11. 2.

(f) 1 Cor.

12. 7.

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ally if by some grosse and scandalous sin ye drive away the Spirit, and scandalize your profession, then ye may expect some remarkable stroak; the Lord will vindicate his glorious Name before the sons of men, who have been witnesses of the dishonour done to him. If the Vestal Nunnes were deflowred, they suffered a most (g) terrible kind of death; their profession and function was thought holy and honourable, and therefore their punishment was fearfull and remarkable; and though the Lord will not destroy any of his honest servants, yet he will distress and chastise them; when they (h) step aside to folly; he may drive them from his presence, and shut them up in prison, where there is neither light nor heat; and in this extremity, they are ready to warm themselves at their own fire, and to (i) walk in the light of the sparks they have kindled, running either to creature-comforts to calm that storm (being in that distemper somewhat like to (k) *Saul*, who when the evil spirit from the Lord came upon him, called for the musicians) or else they rest on their duties, not looking up to the Spirit for his help; thus, as it were, daring, with *Nadab* and *Abihu*, to offer strange fire before the Lord. It was not lawfull for the Vestal (l) Nunnes to kindle their sacred fire, if once put out, any other way but from the Sun-beams; though the Saints fire be never totally extinguished, yet in the night of desertion (while the soul is asleep and neglects to maintain it) it becometh so weak, that without a new supply from heaven, it will not burn our sacrifice; and if strange fire be taken in the place of it, our sacrifice will not be accepted: Every fire is not kindled from heaven, there is a fire that ariseth from the bowels of the earth (as in (m) earth-quakes) and that is dangerous: there is also a (n) fire that cometh from hell, and this (whatever be the fuel and matter, yet as to its original) is devilish. The bullock thou offerest may be without blemish, and yet brought from the wrong herd: it concerneth us therefore to know whence good motions come, and how they arise in the heart, before we bring them to the Altar and offer them up to God. And thus we come to the last particular we promised to speak to, which hath two branches, *viz.* how that sacred fire that cometh

(g) *Vid.*
Plut. loc. cit.

(h) *Pl.* 85. 8.

(i) *If.* 50.
1. 2.

(k) *1 Sam.* 16.

(m) *Lev.*
10. 1.

(l) *Vid. Plut.*
loc. cit.

(n) *Vid.*
doctiss. Ioan.
de Mey. Sac.
phys. parti. 2.
loc. 5.

(o) *Sam.* 3. 6.

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cometh from heaven, may be known and distinguished, 1. from that fire which cometh from hell 2. from the fire that proceedeth only from our own bowels, or is brought from our own harts.

As for the first, we shall, 1. speak a word to that which is supposed; and then, 2. to the question it self. 1. Then it is here supposed, that Satan hath an influence upon the heart and can suggest to us either good (as to the object and matter) or ill thoughts, and can obstruct to the bringing forth of vile lusts and affections. It were too large a field (neither will we digresse so far) to speak of the severall wayes and methods Satan observeth that he may allure and intangle weake and foolish men, but we shall now only in the generall, and briefly speak to that intricat and obstruse question, how Satan doth work on the understanding and will; whether mediately or immediately: and the common opinion not only of popish Casuists and School men, but of all Divines of whatsoever profession, whether orthodox, Lutheran &c. is, that Satan hath only a *mediat* access unto, and *indirect* work upon the heart, *v.z.* in that he can work upon the senses, (whether outward or inward) and imagination, and there stir up *Phantasms* and representations, whereby the mind and will (by reason of their sympathy and connexion with those inferior faculties) being affected, are drawn along to subscribe, approve and comply with what is thus suggested unto them by these native trufties. And thus Satan may be compared to an enemy besieging an impregnable fort, who having gained some out-works, doth from thence at a venture cast fire balls over the wall, or in at the windows, not knowing whether they shall hurt or not; so Satan that malicious enemy, having access to the senses, imagination, and sensitive appetit, (those naturall agents, neither being able to resist his power, nor watchfull against his assaults, are more easily brought under; and he having friends within to open the door, and welcom him, may enter when he will, unless the Lord rebuke and withhold him) doth from thence cast his *(p)* *fiery darts* and temptations, not knowing whether these will prevaile with the mind and will.

But

(o) *Vid. eandem*
Scholast: ad 1.
2, quest. 82.
loc. com. *Scripto-*
res § de tem-
tatione. *Cato-*
licij: in orat.
domini, in primis
vero Thom.
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deception. or
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Ch 6.7.8.9.10.

(p) Eph. 6.16.

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But we would rather joyn with those (q) few, (who yet do not so expressly assert and deliver that point) Which affirm that Satan, if (and so when) permitted by God might have an immediat access, not only to the sensitive and maeriall, but also to the rational and spirituall faculties of the soul.

1. Because modern Philosophers have discovered the weaknesse of those grounds whereupon the common opinion concerning the reall and Physicall difference and distinction of those faculties amongst themselves, or from one another and from the soul, was founded and built; and if there be no such difference amongst them, what reason can be given why Satan may immediatly and directly work upon some but not upon others?

2. Though sensitive and materiall objects be more proportionat and suitable for us, (who in our acting depend upon the senses) to work upon, yet wherefore should we thus limit spirits, and deny that they can have an immediat access to our spirits? Especially, since, 3. Angels (both good and evil) have some society among themselves, converse mutually together, and open up their thoughts to one another: and to say (as some School-men imagine) that they stand in need, and make use of outward symbols and signes for this effect, is to deny that they can (r) act as spirits, and suitably to their nature; or else to joyn with those (s) Fathers (whom yet the popish Doctors in this reject) who taught that angels were corporeall. We might resume, and apply this argument to the society that is among the souls of just men made perfect.

4. Many temptations (as in the case of desertion) are spirituall, and such as cannot be imagined to arise from

notionem sine consensu loquentis, at (inquam) iste consensus nihil virtutis addit potentia intellectiva Angelis audientis, ergo ex se potuisset &c. metaph. di. 12. scilicet, 4. § 31. We might here also cite severall others both school-men and practisall Divines, but when they come to their imitations, and meet with objections, they seem to overthrow what they had builded. (r) Modus operandi sequitur modum essendi. (s) Angelos esse corporeos docuerunt, Tertullus, Lactantius, Justinus Martyr, Methodius, Eusebius, Origen, Augustinus, & alii quas cum Molina in 1. quæst 50. art. 1. citat. M. Becan. theol. sch. part. 1. tract. 3. cap. 1. quæst. 2. & in concilio Niceno 1. art. 5. Joa. Thessalonienus. epist. dixit, ita ecclesiam catholicam docere.

the sensitive faculties, unlesse it were very remotely, occasionally, indirectly and ineffectually, while as they are often strong, continued for a long time, &c. Thus also we might argue from prophecies, and sudden suggestions, revelations, and discovery of Secrets made by Satan to his emissaries; his teaching of them sciences, languages, &c. his resolving intricate and dark questions, and giving to them ability to manage and interpose in subtile disputations: it seemeth very strange to imagine how these things could be performed by his working upon the (r) matteriall faculties.

5. The Scriptures which speak of Satans temptations and work upon the heart, seem to hold out more then an impression upon the senses and imagination; as if Satan only at a distance, mediately, and indirectly could work upon the mind and heart; for it is said, that *he putteth in the heart to itself, but outwards, Job. 13. 2. that he filleth the heart and blindeth the mind, Act. 5. 3, 2. Cor. 4. 4. that he beguileth and corrupteth the mind, 2 Cor. 11. 3. and that he entreateth into the man, and taketh him captive at his will, Luk. 22. 3. 3 Timoth. 2. 26. that he became a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahabs Prophets, 2 Chron. 18, 2 &c.*

But here ariseth a subtile question (more fit to be debated in the Schools then here by us) viz. what kind of work hath Satan upon the mind and heart? what doth he, and whereby representeth he objects to the mind and motives to allure the will? *Ans.* The same difficulty hath place concerning his work upon the phantasie and sensuall appetite; and concerning the speech and society that is among Angels, and souls separated from the body; none of which can be performed without some kind of work, impression, communication, intimation, manifestation, &c. There is here then no speciall difficulty, and what might satisfie for clearing these other questions, would also prove satisfactory in this. But, 1. It is certain that albeit Satan can obstericac and help forward, yet he cannot of himself produce and elicit any *visall act* in man; for that of necessity must flow from an *internall principle*. Yet, 2. on the other hand, it seemeth no lesse certain from Scripture and experience, that Satan can offer

(1) The phantasie and sensuall appetites, may be called matteriall, not entitative and fully Objective, because it is conversant about matteriall objects upon sensible motives: but according to the common opinion, which maintaineth a real difference between the faculties of the soul, the phantasie is difficultly will be greater for, &c.

(u) Vid.

scholastic.

communi et

ad 1. quæst:

107. & Becan.

schol. schol.

part. 1. tract. 3.

quæst. 14.

(x) Tunc

angelus manif-

estus alteri

suum actum

interiorem

quando impri-

mit illi spe-

ciem intelli-

bilem intuiti-

ve repre-

sentantem

actum inter-

iorem, & hoc

facit per mo-

dum objecti,

Ergo tantum

intentionaliter, & non Phisice, eliciendo scil. aliquem actum in audiente.

Becan. loc. cit. § 1. 3. de distinctione inter speciem hanc impressam & speciem

expressam vid. philosoph. de anima, ubi hanc statuunt esse actualem, illam tantum

virtualem cognitionem: sed adhuc sub iudicio lis est, an species possit communiter

ab objecto spiritali, sicut a materiali, & sensibili, vid. Rev. Suar. repetit. in

disp: 35. pag. 804. 806.

As for Objections, all that I have met with of (y) any moment, or which (I think) can be brought against Satans immediate influence upon the superior and spirituall faculties of the soule, may be comprised in this one, viz. That hence it would follow, 1. That Satans might know the secrets of the heart; And, 2. that he had power over it to turn it whether-soever he would; both which the Lord doth challenge as his own incommunicable priviledge. *Ans.* Its true, the Lord hath reserved both these as the sovall prerogatives of his crown; he hath not put in the hands either of Angels or men, either, 1. to search and know; or, 2. to rule and bow the heart. As to the first, the Scripture once and again excludeth all creatures, and proclaimeth it to be the Lords property to know our thoughts and secrets, and to search the heart. 2 Chr. 6. 30. 1 King. 8. 39. 1 Sam. 16. 7. Jer. 17. 9, 10. Jer. 11. 20. Jer. 12. 20. Psa. 7. 9. Psa. 44. 21. Prov. 17. 3. Prov. 2. 2. Act. 1. 24. 1 Thes. 2. 4. Rev. 2. 23. &c. From those and many other texts, it is manifest, that the Lord hath cast a vail and covering over the thoughts and desires of the heart, that no fellow creature can look in and see or discern them. 1. As an evidence

(y) Some other objections might be alledged from the schoolmen; but such as scarce deserve a refutation, as that Satans cannot illabi in animam, Ergo. *Ans.* If by that illaplus in essentiam animæ (which Dom. Bannez thinks to be so necessarily required in him who may be said to work immediately upon the heart) any other thing be understood

(as I know in the schools there is, and Bannez there doth require viz. ut de illi esse actu, conservando, fovendo &c.) then a due approximation, so that the patient is within the agents sphere of activity, (such a condition is gratis and without ground required and made necessary, for an immediate influence upon the heart, and as easily denied and rejected by us, as offered and required by Bannez, ad 1. quæst. 111. pag. 539. that phrase seemeth to have been first used by Aulstin, or who-soever was the author of that book, de Ecclesiast. dogmat. whom Lombard. 2. sent. dist. 8. calleth Gennadius, and Brasivus in his criticall Preface to that book saith that it was reputed to be Tertullian; but it is commonly placed amongst Augustins works tom. 1. where that author, cap. 181. affirmeth, that illabi menti, illi soli possibile est qui creavit. But we need not further enquire concerning the meaning of that phrase; but if so our case there be a sufficient approximation, what can hinder the agent from working upon a (utable subject neither. 2. is Scotus his reason more weighty and conclusive; who upon his account doth say that the devil can work upon the intellectu, quia intellectus noster pro isto statu est passivum determinatum ad determinatum activum, scil. Phantasmata & intellectum agentem. 40. c. 2. sent. dist. 13. quæst. unica, pag. (mili) 172. For I grant, that the mind of it self cannot work but dependently, upon the imagination; yet there is no ground for alledging that it cannot receive an immediate impression from a superior agent, whether from the Lord himself, or from an angel, good or bad.

of his sovereignty; this chamber of presence is reserved for the King alone; no subject without his licence dare come in here. 2. That there might be some society, fellowship and communication amongst Angels, and amongst souls in the state of separation from the body. 3. For the comfort of weak men, who have to do with such a strong, subtile and vigilant enemy; if Sathan knew all our thoughts and purposes, what mischief might he do to us? how easily might he surprize us? and how effectually tempt us?

But what that veil is, which the Lord hath drawn over the heart, to hide and cover it from Sathans eye, and what that bull-work is, which the Lord hath reared up to hold off that enemy, so that he cannot enter, nor thrust in any of his fiery darts without a licence and permission, is, I confess, not easie to determine or explain; sense cannot reach, nor reason fully discover it, and we have no revelation here to direct us. But though we cannot particularly discover what that covert (which no creature can remove, pierce, or look thorough) is, and wherein it consisteth; yet it would appear, that there is some positive obstacle and impediment, which hindreth Angels from beholding an object of it self intelligible, and proportionated to their understanding (for if our thoughts and purposes did exceed their cognoscitive faculty, they could not know then when that veil is removed, and there could be no communication and society amongst Angels and spirits.) only this much we may say, that albeit the bodily eye hath *potentiam visivam*, so that of it self, it is sufficiently qualified for discerning and beholding colours. Yet, 1. it must be directed towards, and applyed to look upon the object; otherwise it cannot see it: so the Angels, when they do not reflect upon and look into our heart, cannot see and know what is there. But, 2. as 1. a seeing eye, 2. a visible object, and, 3. attention, is not sufficient, unlesse there be some light from without to illustrate the object, and to manifest it to the eye; so neither can any created spirit discern spiritual objects, without some proportionable beam and manifestation of them from the *Father of lights*, which he vouchsafeth and suspendeth according to his own good pleasure. Yes, 3. If the Lord would

would only withdraw his generall influence, determination and concurrence (which is so necessary to the creatures being and acting) the seeing eye could not discern colours, nor the fire (as is (2) thought to have hapned in the Babylonish furnace, *Dan. 3. 25, 27.*) burn what is cast into it. And thus some (though but a (4) few) give this as the only reason why Angels do not know the secrets of the heart, viz. because the Lord will not concur with any creature for knowing the thoughts and secrets of its fellow-creature, till the party himself consent, that such or such a one should know and be made privy to his thoughts; and that then the Lord only concurrerth to the knowing of so much, and by such only, as the party concerned willetth and consenteth should be imparted and made known. And thus angel-speech must import no more, *ex parte loquentis*, but a willing and consenting, that others (whether one or moe) should know such and such a thought, or desire and purpose of his heart. I know none, who of purpose hath disputed against this modern opinion concerning the speech of Angels; only I find in M. *Becan* (speaking to (b) another purpose) two reasons that may be urged against it; 1. its miraculous for the Lord to deny his general and ordinary help and concurrence to the creature when it requireth it, and is ready to work, if not thus impeded and hindred. 2. But if God would concur, an Angel might thus search the heart and know what is in man; which is Gods incommunicable property. *Ans.* 1. What is ordinary and constant, ought not to be called miraculous, especially when a publick good requireth it (as here the good of man, his preservation from Sathan, that roaring Lyon, that there may be some society amongst spirits, &c. Thus the earth and the water make one globe for the commodity of living creatures (which is contrary to the natural inclination of these elements, the waters naturally propending to be above, and cover the earth, but no such contrariety to any natural inclination can be alledged to be in the present case) 2. To imagine an equal, constant and uniform concurrence to be due to free and morall agents, and that at all times and occasions, is contrary to reason and experience, and to the limitation,

(2) *Sed testis meo iudicio doctissimus nostras Seran- gius, pu ar id non ideo factum quod Deus subtra- bens concurre- sum suum effe- cerit ut ignis ureret, quia, &c. Sed quia Deus interea seruos suos ad- versus violentiam ignis munivit, ne latere possent. vid. loc.*
Serang. de volunt. & act. lib. 1. cap. 17.
 (3) *Viz Pet. A. S. Jose, & ide theol. spec. lib. 3 cap. 4 & Hurtad. metaph. disp. 13 sect. 4.*
 (b) *M. Becan disputing against Scotus his assertion, who shinketh that there may be species intelligibiles in the understanding without cognition, vid. Becan. theol. part. 1. tract. 1. cap. 1.*
 tion, *quæst. 101*

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tion, *Jam. 4. 15. If the Lord will* (should the creature say) *we shall do this or that.* That debt and obligation which Jesuits and Arminians will have the Lord to ly under, so that he must concur with second causes as they shall require, and alwayes answer their beck and nodd, is a most intolerable limitation of the most high and lofty one, to the will and appointment of the poor weak ignorant foolish (c) creature. 3. I would ask, whether it be not granted on all hands, that one Angel cannot know the thoughts of another without his consent? but that consent doth not add any light or strength to the intellectuall faculty of the other, whereby he becometh more able to know what formerly he could not; and therefore all must needs here acknowledge some special dispensation of providence; whether it should be called miraculous or not, we will not further enquire, neither doth it concern us more then others.

As to the second, the question is not, whether an Angel might be so assisted, as that he might search the heart (which our famous Countrey-man *Jo. (d) Scotus* long since taught, with some limitations, and in a qualified sense) and know the thoughts; but whether or not the Lord doth allow to him such a measure of light and assistance, and doth remove all impediments, so that he doth actually know, and may at his pleasure search the heart of his fellow-creature. And all here agree in denying that it is so, neither will it follow from Sathans immediate influence, which we affirm to have place only then, when the Lord is pleased to remove the vail, and permit him to look in. And yet in the former case, and supposing that there were no covering spread over the heart, yet

(c) *metaphorologi-
calomains
cum Thoma.
fatur Deum
quorū cum
causis secundis
concurrit, non
nisi congruen-
ter naturis
genit & dis-
positioni ipsa-
rum. operari,
vid. de diffi-
T. with de sci-
med. l. 6. 3.
pag. 434. ubi
optime expli-
cat quo modo
Deus pro suo
beneplacito
possit immu-
tare volunta-
tem homini;
& lib. 1. pag.
170. concedit
in Deo esse di-
cretum quorū-
dam genit.*

*le docendis creaturis suis ad suos motus congruenter naturis ipsarum. (d) Nihil est in men-
te (operatio scilicet) quacunque intellectus vel voluntatis, vel quacunque proprietas vel conditio
realis vujus vel istius) quin totum ita pateat angelo presentis non impedito sicut animā ap-
paret albedo presentis per sensum. Illud ergo dictum, solus Deus novit abscondita cordium
verum est universaliter, & ex propria perfectione; ita quod impossibile sit per aliquid im-
pediens ubi lateat. at Angeli multi tales motus non novimus, propter defectum debita
presentia, & mali angeli multa talia etiam presentia non novimus, Deo impediēte, &c.
Scot. in 4. (cui dist. 45. quæst. 4. sect. ad 2. dico. pag. (mihi) 472.*

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the understanding of Angels (whether good or bad) being of a limited and finite capacity, could not, 1. comprehend all the thoughts, nor thoroughly and perfectly search the heart; far less, 2. the hearts of all men; especially, 3. when they do not advert and look in; and, 4. if the distance be too great; and, 5. when they are not, *viz.* either before they arise in the heart, or after that they are past; O! but the infinite eye of God doth perfectly and independently search the heart, he doth not need the assistance of any, nor can any thing escape his knowledge; so that he must know, 1. all the thoughts; 2. of all men; 3. at whatsoever distance; and 4. a fare off, while they have no being, and after they are past; and before they have a being or did arise in the heart, or could fall under the view of any creature (and thus before we could know our own thoughts) *Pf.* 139. 2. The Lord from all eternity did appoint, and foresee what thoughts and purposes should be in the hearts of men and angels unto all eternity. And so much concerning Sathans knowing and searching.

As to the other branch of the difficulty, propounded at the beginning, *viz.* concerning his power over the heart. We *Ans.* Albeit Sathan (when the Lord permitteth him) hath an immediate access to our most secret chamber and cabin, and thus may cast his fiery darts not only towards, but also up and down the house, yet he cannot set it on fire; though he may parly with the will, and suggest his temptations, yet he cannot (e) force it to consent and welcome the temptation:

That Virgin cannot be ravished by him without her own voluntary choyce and consent; and then it is not a rape, but a free bargain and spoutaneous yeelding to him; though he

(e) *Latrare potest, sollicitare potest, mordere omnino non potest nisi volentem;*

non enim cogendo sed suadendo nocet; nec extorquet a nobis consensum sed petit, Aug. (serm. 197. de tempore, prope finem) nos diabolus non adjuvamus, et vincimus; dat ille quidem consilium sed Deo auxiliante nostrum est vel eligere vel repudiare quod suggerit, bom. 12. ex 30. oper. Tom. 10. fol. (mihi) 96. Sed tantum turbare potest et fallere quantum nos volumus

Præsent. in hamartogenia

Angelus non fit esse supra hominum quod sit causa voluntatis ejus;... nihil aliud potest esse causa voluntatis nisi ipse Deus... Angelus autem tantum objective movere potest voluntatem, Thom. 1, 2. quæst. 9. art. 6.

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can counsel and allure, and many wayes insinuate and labour to perswade, yet he hath not power over the will to compell and draw it along; he can blow at the fire within, and cast in fuel, but he cannot inflame the heart and affections; he can with much art and subtilty suggest, but he cannot force us to entertain his suggestions. Only, he who made the heart, can bow and change it, and turn it whethersoever he will, *Pron. 21. 1. Prov. 16. 1, 9. Jer. 10. 23. Jer. 32. 39. Ezek. 11. 19. Act. 16. 14. &c.*

You will say, if the Saints did think that Sathan could come so near to them, they would live in a continual fear? this is very terrible and uncomfortable doctrine. *Ans.* Can it vex and grieve the Saints, that they are in the hand of God, and that they must live in a continuall dependance upon him? Sathan is chained, *Jude, v. 6.* and he cannot advance one foot towards thee, unless the Lord loose some links of that chain: And though that Lyon roar never so fiercely, yet he cannot make a prey of thee without thine own consent. Therefore, albeit the consideration of Sathans immediat approach, should stir us up to watchfulness and circumspection in our walk, yet it needs not in the least discourage the Saints. Whatever be said, as to the way and manner of his working upon the heart (whether it be mediāt or immediāt) if the Lord would permit him to do his worst, and would leave us (who are so weak, foolish and corrupt) to our selves, how easily would we become a prey to his manifold and subtile temptations? it were no difficult work for him to set on fire that powder-train that is within us: And doth not our life, both natural and spiritual, our estate, all our comforts and accommodations, depend upon God? and will it grieve the child that he must look up to his kind father for protection and provision?

1. Mf.

Now a word of application, 1. Let us magnifie and praise the Lord, who keepeth this roaring Lyon in iron-chains, and doth not permit him to do all the hurt and mischief he would, and otherwise might do to us. Though he may permit him to winnow and sift the Saints, yet will never suffer him to blow away the wheat; though he may make them stagger and fall

1. Yet he shall never be able to make their faith fall, Luk. 20. 31, 32. and without their own consent and concurrence, he cannot draw and compell them to commit the least sin or blunce.

2. Beware that thou make not Sathans power and malice a cloak and excuse for thy sin; all his prisoners are voluntiers, none are taken captives by him at his (f) will, without their own will and consent. To this purpose, the famous (g) Augustine speaketh notably well, Sathan (saith he) is a dog chained, and can bite none, but those who come within his reach, and who by their stupid security cast themselves in his way. He must be a mad man, who is bitten by a chained dog. Do not then by giving way to thy sensual and carnall delights and lusts, cast thyself within the compass of his chain, and though he may bark at thee, yet he cannot bite; though he may counsell and sollicit, yet he cannot draw and compell. He cannot bite or wound any man without his own will and consent. And (h) elsewhere, There is nothing (saith he) can delight the devil more, then to hear sinners excuse themselves, and cast the blame upon him; knowing their condition to be desperat, till they confesse and take with their guiltiness; but could Sathan force thee, O man? diast thou not voluntarily go to work? All that Satan could do, was to counsell and sollicit, but why diast thou not rather hearken to Gods counsell? thou hadst a monitor on the right hand, and on the left, and thou wast placed, as it were, in the middle, why then diast thou rather hearken to Sathans Syren song on the left hand, then to the voice from heaven on the right? why diast thou rather follow Sathan into everlasting perdition, then Christ into eternall life? did not God

2. Ue.
(f) 1. Tim. 2. 26.

(g) Sed dicit aliquis, si alligatus est, quare ad hoc tantum prevallet? verum est, frater charissime, quod multum prevaleat, sed tepidis et negligentibus. Deum tu veritas non vult ac non vult membris dominatur, alligatus enim est, necat eum catenis, et neminem potest morderi, nisi si cum quis illi mortifera consuetudine conjungatur: jam videtur fratres quam

stultus est homo ille quem canis in catena positus morderi, tunc illi per voluntatem et cupiditatem seculi noli conjungere, et ille ad te non presumis accedere, latrare potest, sollicitare potest, morderi omnino non potest nisi volentem: non enim cogendo sed suadendo docet, ut exorquet a vobis consensum sed petis. August. Serm. 197. de temporibus. (h) Multi confessionem peccati sic faciunt, ut ipsum Satanam accusent, &c. (vid. in supradictum, ubi luculenter demonstras perperam homines sceleribus suis ostendere vim a demonio illorum) Aug. hom. 22. ex. 50.

offer thee strength, and wast thou not able in the power of his might to stand against the power and wiles of the devil? Eph. 6. 10. 11. Its true, Sathan doth obtestricate, and playeth the mid-wife to the bringing forth of sin; yea, in some sense he is the father, and concurrerth to the conception of it: but yet never without the mothers consent: and as in the proper and natural generation, though some of the learned do think that Sathan may have a hand in it, as is commonly reported of the famous English *Merlin*, that he was begotten of the devil; and *Lud. Vives* (i) saith that some nations did most abominably glory, that they did descend of the devils; but whatever truth be in the thing it self, yet its granted on all hands, that the devil is not the true and proper (k) father of such a child, and that any help he did contribute to that conception, was by borrowing from another hand, to which (according to this disputable supposition) the conception is to be ascribed, and he, and not the devil, to be accounted the true father of such a wretched child. So that the devil was only the instrumental cause, by applying pertinent actives and passives. And thus it is in the moral and metaphorical conception of sin, though the devil may have his hand, and be very instrumental in the work, by applying futable objects for alluring the will, yet the true and proper parent, is the sinner himself, and the lusts of his own heart: and therefore while in Scripture, the pedigree and parentage of sin is described, these only are mentioned; as if in comparison of these, any hand that Sathan could have in that wicked work, scarce deserved to be named and mentioned, *Jam. I. 14, 15*. And then, 2. as in respect of that physical generation, many children are fathered upon the devil by fabulous writers, to the conception of whom, he did no wayes contribute or concur (whatever truth may be in the general assertion, yet there is no judicious Divine, who will not reject the fables of Poets and platonick Cabalists, as fictitious and ridiculous) so also as to his moral influence in the conception of sin, there be too many, who are ready to bring an excuse for their wicked deeds from Sathans temptations, while as he had no hand, and did not sollicit them to such practises, and perhaps would scarce

(i) Ludov. Vives in August. de civ. Dei lib. 9. cap. 23.

(k) Nonnulli affirmant diabolum posse semen virile altitudo adferre. & in uterum femineum injicere, ut inde sequatur conceptio; ita ut verus pater istius sit non sit diabolus sed is ex cuius semine gigneretur. vid. Scholast. ad 1. quest. 31. art. 3. & in lib. 2. cont. dist. 8.

scarce be at the pains to tempt such, as being already caught, and lying contentedly in his snare. It is a groundless conceit to think, that all sins come from the suggestions of the devil; for, *albeit there were not a devil to tempt* (as (1) Aquinas from Origen saith) *yet there would be sin enough in the world.* There is fire enough within, and much fewer still ministered from without; though there were no devil, yet the world would bring provision enough to feed the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, 1 *Job.* 2. 15, 16. Though seed must be cast in the earth before it bring forth precious fruits, yet weeds will spring up of their own accord; we need not plow nor sow; we need not prune nor dig that bryars and thorns may come up; nay, unless we carefully keep and dresse our vineyard, and be at much pains to hold them down, they will quickly overspread it, *Isa.* 5. 6. And therefore Satan needs not be at the pains to tempt carnal and secure sinners, they need not a monitor, they will be busie enough at his work, though he neither oversee, sollicit, nor concur. And as for the Saints, against whom he mainly rageeth, what his subtilty and craft can devise, or his power effectuat, his malice will stir him up to do for their ruine and mischief, and to hinder them in their way to the place from which he was thrust down; O! how doth it vex fallen angels to consider, that frail weak men, by nature far inferior to them, and by sin too like unto them, should fill their room, and be taken up to the (m) *habitation they have left.* But praise be to the keeper of *Israel*, who hath bound this strong one, and now this cruel mastiff (n) can go no further then his chain doth reach; wo to us, if we were in the hands of devils, if they might tempt and vex us at their pleasure. But alas, we often tempt Satan to tempt us, and provoke the Lord to let loose this Lyon upon us: and therefore have reason rather to chide our own hearts, and accuse our own selves because Satan hath tempted us, then to extenuate and excuse our sins and transgressions upon that account.

qua tamen non impediti naturaliter possunt, Scotus in 4. sent. dist. 45. quæst. 4. prope finem.

(1) Thom.
1. quæst. 114.
art. 3. in
corp. Etiam si
diabolus non
esset, &c. vid.
etiam aut.
lib. de eccles.
dogmat. cap.
181. Fatetur
tamen Tho-
mas omnia
peccata indi-
recte à diabo-
lo oriri, quia
viz. primum
hominem in-
stigavit ad
peccandum,
ex cuius pec-
cato pronitas
in natura hu-
mana ad om-
nia alia pec-
cata consecuta
est, ibid. incorp.

(m) Jud v. 6.

(n) Angeli
mali multa
etiam presen-
tia non nove-
runt Deo
impediente
propter cuius
impedimen-
tum non
possunt multa

(o) Psa. 16. 3.
Ecb. 11. 38.

(p) *Est autem
cognoscere all-
quem de long-
inquo suum
abique ullo.
familiaritatis
commercio vo-
lunt en remotis
quis & qualis
sit cognoscere,
ac cognitum a-
spicere, Mus-
cul. in Psa.
138. 6.
(q) Colof. 3.
12.*

... of Satans malice, activity and power
should stir us up to the practise of severall duties, as 1. *hu-
mility*. Ah! how ready is the foolish vain creature to vilifie
and disdain, and to keep a distance from those who have a
mean portion of the trash of this world; they will not stoop
so low as to converse with, or let a word fall to such (as they
conceive) objects, though perhaps they be the precious and
(o) excellent ones, of whom the world is not worthy. Ah!
proud man, dost thou not know that thou perhaps entertainest
worse company? thou who thinkest it below thee, to suffer
thy brethren to draw nigh to thee, Satan may be permitted
to enter thy most secret closet, and be acquainted with thy
most secret thoughts and purposes, he may be familiar with
thee, and have too much moeyen with thee, yea and power
over thee; and thus by thy pride thou openest a door for
him to enter in at. God (p) knoweth the proud afar off,
but suffers Satan to come neer to them: not as if the Lord
did not know, and would not one day judge the proud, but
because he doth not regard him, but giveth him over to
Satans searching and tutory: such as would hold off and resist
the devil, would labour to (q) put on bowels of kindnesse,
meeknesse and humblenesse of mind, Jam. 4. 6, 7. Self-denial,
self-renunciation and submission to God, is a necessary mean of
self-preservation, and the souls security, and protection
from Satans assaults.

2. This may serve to stir us up to *sobriety*, circumspection
and watchfulnesse, 1 Pet. 5. 8. Its no time for sleep and se-
curity, while the enemy is not only going about our tents,
and looking in at the windows, but hath entered the utter-
court, yea and perhaps the parlour, and most secret corner;
what need have we to look narrowly not only to our words,
and works, but to our thoughts and imaginations, while our
adversary is so neer us, who is such a diligent observer
of the very first motions of the heart, and so ready to im-
prove every advantage he getteth? if we halt and stumble, he
will not fail to lay a snare before our feet that he may catch us;
he is waiting that he may joyn with the least distemper, and
to blow up the first spark of inordinacy that he espieth in our
affections.

infections; and the Lord in justice may suffer those to fall, who did not look better to their steps. Let us then (r) gird up (r) 1 Pet. 1. 13. the loyns of our mind, and take unto us the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of of the devil, and the violence of these principalities and powers, *Eph. 6. 11, 12, 13.*

3. The consideration of Satans power and malice should make us live in a continuall dependence on him who is stronger then this mighty one, and who is able (s) to keep thy tabernacle in peace, notwithstanding his fury and terrible assaults. Though we must put on the whole armour of God, yet above all the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of that wicked one. *Eph. 6. 11. 16.* Faith engageth God in our quarrel, and if he be on our side we are strong enough, who ever be against us, *Rom. 8. 31.* we must prevaile, and be victorious; what can persecution, tribulation and distress, whether from devils or men, do unto us? nay, (saith the Apostle) in all these things we are more then conquerors through him that loved us. *2, 35, 37.*

4. The danger we stand in from this cruel one, should chase us in to God, and make us frequently and fervently ask of him, that he would limit and bind this mighty one, that he would appoint his holy (t) angels to be a guard about our tabernacle, and give them charge over us to keep us in all our

(r) Ps. 91.
11, 12.

(u) Aquinas affirmeth that all the good we do proceedeth from the suggestion of good angels, Sum 1. part. quæst. 114. art. 3. in 2. & ad 2. But the Author of that book de E. cl. dogmat. having denied that all our evil thoughts do flow from the suggestion of Satans, doth by way of opposition, more warrantably subjoyn, that all our good cogitations and works do come

from God, cap. 182. Albeit we desire not in the least to diminish the Ministry of Angels, nor simply deny that they may suggest good thoughts, as well as the devil can suggest evil. yet we conceive that the scripture doth mainly and more expressly hold out to us their externall then inward Ministry, in that they are sent to guard and protect the Saints from the violence of devils and men. Yet not so as if all our externall (far lesse those which are internall and spiri-
tual) mercies were dispensed to us by their hands, or that such and such were deputed constantly to attend such persons; but because the Lord doth employ, when it seemeth good to him, such and such Angels to minister to such and such Saints some particular mercies which at other times he doth immediately bestow (yea to the same persons) without their ministry. And since they may be thus employed to withstand the devil in all his assaults, (whether Spirituall or externall) against us, we may well pray, that the Lord would employ them for our assistance in our Christian warfare against Satan and his emissaries; albeit, 1. the work of grace on the heart, in its renovation, conversion and the infusion of the principles of life, be above their reach, Creatura non potest creare, hold true as well in respect of the second, as the first Creation. And, 2. though they may have some hand, and be some wayes instrumentall in the exercise of our graces, by suggesting good motions and pertinent motives &c. yet we must look over the instruments unto the Lord himself, who only hath power over the heart, and who of himself only can quicken enlarge and enable us for every good word and work. Hence in scripture our Sanctification in all its parts and their exercise, is only and adequately ascribed to the holy Ghost. (x) Mat. 6. 13.

petition to God? not that we should (y) curse those cursed spirits, but that we should earnestly beg, that the Lord would bind and limit them and restrain their power and violence: O! but a prayer-lesse Saint is weak, and wanting such a necessary part of his armour, he may be easily wounded and foiled.

5. While we look upon our selves standing in the open field and exposed to the violence of these mighty and cruel spirits, and while we behold all the legions of hell engaged and raging against us, O! how should we be affected with the astonishing goodnesse of God, who all this while hath kept and preserved us? and how should it melt our hearts to consider that while we was provoking God, he was watching over us and standing for our defence? that while we was working Sathans work, he was guarding us against Sathans violence? All honour and praise be for ever ascribed to our God, who hath not given us over to be led captive by Satan at his will; that, with Job, we are not afflicted in our persons and estates, that our hearts are not pestered with hellish suggestions, and blasphemous imaginations, and that we have been preserved from so many strong and subtile temptations; for our peace within and without, praise be to the name of our God.

But, 4. Out of (x) the eater may come meat, and sweetnesse out of the strong: from this point, which may seem so terrible, the Saints may bring some ground of consolation, while they find strange and atheistical thoughts of unbelief, yea perhaps and of blasphemy to rise in their heart; while they might apprehend that such guests durst not once offer to enter in, and to which they gave no call nor invitation and suitable entertainment when they came; by abominating the company of these unwelcome intruders, they may, to their comfort, know that an enemy hath sown these tares in their fields: that ill seed was not brought from their garner, it is Sathans work, he hath stollen in that cursed grain in their ground; and if they do not cherish, comply with, and consent unto his motions, his injecting of them will not be imputed to them as their sin; it was not (a) Benjamins fault that Josephs cup was put in-

(y) Non auctus est Michael ad iracundiam male dicere satana quam ut illam Deo cobibendam traderet. Calv. in Jud. v. 9. The word irritum, here rendered rebuk, significat aliquid cum interminatione & indignatione vel precipere vel prohibere. vid. Edw. Leigh. crit. sac. in voc.

Use. 4.
(2) Judg. 14.
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(a) Gen. 44. 2.

to his sack, but if Benjamin had known and concealed the matter, and thus gone away with the cup, who could have said he was innocent? But Ah! how hard a thing is it to keep powder from kindling when it meeteth with the fire: Sathans fiery darts do easily enflame our lust, and that seed of corruption that still abideth in the best of men: how seldom doth Sathan labour in vain, and we, when tempted, not sin? yet he who knew no sin, was tempted to sin, *Heb. 4. 15. Mat. 4. &c.* but he found nothing in him, *Ioh. 14. 30.* no freinds within to open the door, no pledge nor earnest he had left behind him, he had no claime, and he must go away without his errand. And if we were able to hold him out, whatever claime he may pretend, he were not able to hurt us; and only when, and so far as we welcome, follow, and yeeld to his temptations, we are guilty. O! then let us watch, and take heed to our steps, that we may not (b) minister to Sathan any occasion to assault us. It was while the husband man sleept that the enemy came and sowed his tares, *Mat. 13. 25.* and let us watch and observe their first rise, that we may set our selves against them, labouring to bruise these cockatrice eggs in their hatching: though we have to do with a strong and a crafty enemy, whose spies and friends lurk in our bosom, let us not fear; for greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world, *1 Ioh. 4. 4.* Though of our selves we be weak, yet in the power of Gods might we may do valiantly; let us be doing and (d) acquiring our selves like men in the combat, and we will meet with help from heaven; and the God of peace shall tread Sathan under our feet shortly, *Rom. 16. 20.* If we put on the whole armour of God, we will be enabled to stand against the wiles and stratagems of the devil, *Eph. 6. 11.* We must not in the least give place to him, *Eph. 4. 27.* the least advantage doth encourage him, and he will pursue the first beginings of the victory: but if we keep our ground, and resolutely resist him, though he may tempt and molest us, and from day to day renew his assaults, yet he shall alwayes be a loser, and at length he shall flee from us, and be troden under foot, *1 Iam. 4. 7.*

(b) Sathan (saith Chrysostom, *homil. 3. de Lazaro*) is like to a dog that standeth looking to them that sit at table, waiting to have something cast to him; but if he come once and again, and nothing be thrown to him, he goeth away and is no more troublesome. so do

(c) *Eph. 6. 10.*

(d) *1 Cor. 16.*

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Having premised these things concerning what is supposed, and implied, we come now to speak to the question it self; where we shall not confine our selves to the subject matter, but shall speak more generally of Sathans moving to what is of it self good, but with an eye to the present case, which could not be so well determined in an abstract and peculiar way. But it may seem strange, that the *evil one* should stir us up to any good, especially to prayer, that being no small part of the Christians armour and guard against his wiles and assaults, *Eph. 6. 11. 12.* Yet, his design being thereby to dishonour God and work mischief to us, we need not question and debate the matter; but let us rather take heed to his (e) wiles and devices, who while he cannot gain his point by appearing in his own colours and as the prince of darkness, can (f) transform himself into an angel of light, *2 Cor. 11. 14.*

There be some who (g) affirm, that Sathan is so limited, as to the manner of his apparition, that he cannot assume the perfect shape of a man; So that if the beholders did narrowly mark, they might espy some deformity, whereby they might conjecture, that it were not a true and ordinary body: Thus it is reported of *Luther*, that he discerned Sathan appearing to him in a Monks shape and apparel; when he espied the paw of a Lyon in stead of an arme: but whatever truth be in that, as to his bodily and visible appearing, it must be so in his secret and invisible transformation; he can never so assimilate and resemble an Angel of light; but if we did observe and could discern all his wiles and designs, we might see so much deformity in him, and so much crookedness in his best motions, as might make us say, surely the finger of Sathan is here. And,

1. The devil may move us to do some good, if thereby he may hinder a greater, to perform some one or other duty, to the neglect of some other of more weight and importance. If he can make a lesser duty to juggle out the greater, and a lesse good prove an impediment to a greater, he will not be wanting, but will afford all the provision he can for the doing of that which is less, though not as it is good, but as it is an impediment of good, and therefore as it may prove

(e) *Eph. 6. 11.*
(f) *2 Cor. 11. 14.*
11. Tansacum vis est probitatis ut omnis vel pene omnis ejus laude moveatur humana natura: nec usque adeo sit turpitudine vitiosa ut totum amittat sensum bonitatis, proinde malignitas damnum, nisi alicubi se transfigurent in angelos lucis, non implet negotium deceptionis. August. de civit. Dei lib. 2. cap. 16.
(g) *Vid. Gisb. Voet. sel. diss. de nat. & op. ev. dam. pag. 946.*

a mean to a wicked end. Thus Sathan, in those that were possessed, did acknowledge Christ to be the Son of God, and the Apostles to be the servants of the most High, which shewed the way of salvation, *Luk* 8. 28. *Mat.* 8. 29. *Act.* 16. 17. Was it not a good work to confesse Christ to be the *Messiah*, and to give a testimony to his servants that they were preachers of righteousness? but Satans designe therein was most wicked, and like himself; for thereby he intended to obscure the mystery of incarnation, and to foster that heathen blasphemy of the Pharisees, that Christ did cast out devils by (h) *Beelzebub* the prince of devils. The enemy of all truth, would give testimony to that great and fundamental truth, that *Christ was the promised Messiah*, that thus he might render the testimony of faithfull witnesses, and of the Lord from heaven the more suspect; and that he might invalidat and obscure that clear and convincing evidence which the astonishing miracles wrought by him did produce and hold forth. But the Lord, who can (i) overrule and befool the devil and his instruments, did thereby declare Christs power over those his enemies, that still they, will they, they must give a testimony to him, and to his servants, and the doctrine of the Gospel; the confession of adversaries was alwayes acknowledged to be a most (k) efficacious argument for the truth. Another instance we have in *Peters* counsell to Christ to spare himself, *Mat.* 26. 32. O! (may some think) there was much love, Zeal and tendernes in that motion, but it being obstructive of the work of redemption, it came from hell; and because *Peter* in it did follow Satans suggestion, our blessed Lord calls him Sathan. *v.* 23. Thus also while we should be employed in the publick ordinances, and attend unto them, Sathan may suggest some pious (though impertinent as to the present work) meditation, or stir us up to pray, that thereby he may hinder our edification or conviction by the word preached.

2. Sathan may presse us to duty, as to prayer, reading, conference, &c. that he may make those religious performances a snare to catch our selves and others. He hath many a time laid this snare before young converts, whom he

(h) *Mat.* 9. 34.

Mat. 12. 24.

(i) *Hoc fuit*

en omnipotente

aperta Dei

ut inimici veri-

tatis, fiant ipsi

testes veritatis.

August contra

Psil. Donat.

lib 2 cap. 30.

(k) *Nullum*

efficacius ar-

gumentum, &c.

was not (1) able to divert from the exercise of holiness, he would labour to drive forward, and to make them over-do, to the neglect of their bodily health and callings; that at length he might weary them, and make them faint and give over; & that he might terrifie others from putting their necks under such an insupportable yoke, and that religion might be esteemed to be a tyrant and cruel exactor, which can never be satisfied, and to be inconsistent with health, joy, use of the creatures, lawfull employments, recreations, &c. Albeit we cannot love God and hate sin too much, yet there may

(1) The devil will sail with wind and tide and improve the present temperature and disposition of spirit for his own end.

(m) be a *nimum* in the external exercises of religion, and there may be some excess and distemper intermixed with our spiritual affections; which Sathan by all means will labour to foster and encrease. Thus he improved the zeal of the Church of *Corinth* against the penitent incestuous man, that his sorrow might degenerate into despair, and that he might be swallowed up thereby, 2 *Cor.* 3. 7. Sathan can well bear that some few, and for a short while, be very zealous and active for the Lord, and diligent and frequent in duties, if thereby he can beget a prejudice in the hearts of men against Gods service, and can make them think that Christs burthen were like

(m) See M. Symonds case and cure chap. 20.

the (n) Pharisees, heavy and grievous to be born, contrary to that word of truth, *Mat.* 11. 30. 1 *Joh.* 5. 3.

(n) *Mat.* 23. 4. *Luk.* 11. 46.

3. Sathan may move us to be frequent in prayer, and to wait upon the publick ordinances most punctually, that thereby he may either stop and silence the consciences, and that thus we may commit sin with the greater freedom and boldness, or else (as in gross hypocrites) that this may be a cloak and pretence, a mask and cover to hide our wicked designs and wayes from the eyes of others, that so we may be able to do them the more mischief, and to sin with the less suspicion and hazard. Thus the hypocritical Pharisees, that they might with the more security devour widows houses, for a pretence made long prayers, *Mat.* 23. 14. And *Abolom*, that he might cover his conspiracy and treason, will go and pay his vow in *Hebron*, 2 *Sam.* 15. 7. Sathan could well suggest such a fair pretence to *Abolom*; and bear with pharisaical oppressors in their seeming devotion. But especially his

hand may appear when sinners become so mad, as to think not only to hide their wickedness from men by those outward performances, but also thereby to purchase a liberty from the Lord; and thus, as it were, to hire and bribe him, as they do their own consciences, to be silent; as that impudent woman, *Prov. 7. 14, 15. I have this day* (saith she to the foolish youth whom she enticed to whoredom) *payed my vows; and I have peace-offerings with me, therefore came I forth to meet thee.* As if she had said, I have payed old debt, and by my sacrifices purchased a liberty for us to do wickedly, we need not fear, I have moyen for time to come. I have provided a ransom, and given my bond for what debt we can now contract, I have (o) peace-offerings with me, which will make amends and satisfy for all the wrong we can now do to God,

(o) *Albeit in peace-offerings a portion returned to them, that offered, where-with they might make a feast, unto which this woman in these words invites the young fool, yet I conceive that mainly she laboureth to allure him by the religious pretence here mentioned.*
See Annot. on the Bible edit. Amsterd. in fol. ann. 1640.

4. Sathan may come and stir us up to religious exercises, that thereby he may add fuel to our pride. Thus Pharisees of old, and superstitious Papists to this day, in their madness and exceeding zeal (as *Paul* speaking of his persecuting the Church of Christ calls it) are helped of Sathan; they meet with fire from hell to kindle their affections in their unwarrantable performances; and though their work upon the matter were good and commendable, yet Sathan will not draw back his hand, if thereby he can puff them up, and beget in them an opinion of their own worth, and that by their good works they are justified and merit heaven. *This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you, Gal. 5. 8.* This persuasion, that by your works ye are justified (*v. 4.*) cometh not from God, who calleth you to the kingdom of his dear Son, but from him, who thereby labours to make Christ of none effect unto you (*v. 24.*) and to drive you to hell. We need not then ask, why many Papists are so eminent for works of Charity and liberality, and so frequent in their dead, formal and carnall way of worship, since Sathan will be ready to fill the sails with wind, when the vessel is loaden with provision to feed our ambition and pride; but if that current be once stopt, and a trade rightly carried on for eternity, he will raise what storms he can, and send out many pyrates, either to surprize or draw it back again. Many are the snares

and

and temptations, hinderances and impediments, which the Saints do meet with in their way to heaven; whereas hypocrites and formall professors go on in their course without opposition or difficulty. But let none mistake, as if hereby a pretence were ministred unto the laziness, sloth and negligence of such as are in the right way; certainly the zeal, activity and diligence of those who are without, shall stop thy mouth, and make thee inexcusable in the great day, if thou thus rest upon an orthodox profession; and if thou be in Christ and art led by his Spirit, (p) Stronger is he who is in thee, (p) 1 Joh. 4. 4. then he who is in the world, thou hast another kind of help and assistance for doing good then others: O then, let thy work be answerable.

If in any good motion, we can discern one or more of those wicked designs, we may be jealous lest Satan have a hand in it, and should guard against his devices; which, when espied, may serve as so many marks and characters, whereby we may know the print of his foot, though he be disguised, appearing in white rayment. To which these few may be added.

1. As to the *matter*. If in prayer our desires be merely, or mainly selfish and natural, Satan may concur and blow up the coal of carnal heat within: And thus there may be much enlargement of affections, much fervency and importunity without the help of the Spirit, as in that people, *Hos. 7. 14.* when they assembled themselves, and howled for corn & wine, *Isa. 26. 16.* and when they multiplied their prayers and sacrifices, *Isa. 1. 15, 11.* *Esa* may weep for want of an earthly blessing, *Gen. 27. 34.* though he undervalued and little minded the marrow of the blessing, the love and favour of God. But none can, without the Spirit of God, say with David, *one thing have I desired, that will I seek after, that I may behold the beauty of the Lord, Ps. 27. 4.* And with Asaph, *whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth, I desire besides thee, Ps. 73. 25.* Who is able seriously to pray for help to pluck out the right eye, and cut off the right hand, and to part with his darling lusts and affections, unless he be acted and strengthened by the Spirit of God?

- God? Who can, with *Agar*, say, give me not riches lest they prove a snare, *Prov.* 30. 8, 9. unless the Lord breath into his heart such a desire; Satan will not help thee to (g) seek, the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and in thy desires to prefer holiness to riches, heaven to earth, and Gods glory to thy own self-interest.
- (g) *Mat.* 6. 33. (r) *Jam.* 4. 3. 2. As to the *end*, Satan may stir thee up to (r) ask, that thou mayest consume what thou gettest upon thy lusts; but who doth desire any thing from God, that he may be (f) magnified, and that what he giveth may be employed for his honour, unless he get help from heaven? Only the Spirit of God can elevate our desires to so high and noble an (r) end, and make us honestly obey the exhortation, *1 Cor.* 10. 31. He, who must do all, must also pray to the glory of God, and this of our selves we cannot do.
- (i) *Of the ends of prayer.*
Part. 2. ch. 1. 3. As to the *manner*. Satan can stir us up to pour out absolute and peremptory desires for outward things, and faint, lazy, moderate and submissive desires for grace. Satan makes us invert the right order and method; he will not protest, though thou ask mercy, pardon, of sins, &c. that conscience may be stilled and satisfied; but thou must not be too earnest and anxious concerning those things, and thy desires must not be boundless and illimited; a little of grace (saith he) will do the turn, and any kind of desire, though never so cold and formall, is sufficient. 2. Satan can move thee to ask the world for it self, and to make self thy last end; but the Spirit of God must enable us to deny our selves, and to ask outward things in subordination and in relation to the great end. If Satan prescribe, our lusts must reign, and grace must be the hand-maid, and be only so far sought, as it is subservient to our carnall ends, and for a quiet and peaceable fulfilling of our lusts. 3. Satan can beget in the heart a *child-like expostulation* and confidence; though thou be a stranger, he can make thee expect the portion of a son; he will not suffer thee once to question thy state and acceptance, least if conscience were awakened, thou shouldst seek after a change; But it is the work of the Spirit to beget in us *childlike affections*, and make us love

God, delight in a communion with him and be loath to grieve him; and he only can enable us to call him, in truth, *Abba Father*, *Rom. 8. 15.* 4. Satan can move thee to what is good, unorderly, by making thee leave thy place and station, and invade another mans office; (*u*) *Oh I that I were made Judge in the land, said Absalom,* (and mayest thou say prayer-
ways) Thus also *Saul* would offer sacrifice, *1 Sam. 13. 9.* and *Uzziah* burn incense, *2 Chr. 26. 16. 19.* They would go out of their own sphere and exercise the ministerial Function; wherefore the Lord justly punished both the one and the other. It was good and a commanded duty to offer sacrifice, but it did not belong to *Saul's* office; it was fit that supplication should be made to the Lord, but it belonged not to *Saul* to do it in a publick and ministerial way, (as it would appear *Saul* then did, *v. 12.*) it was necessary that incense should be burnt before the Lord, but it did not appertain to *Uzziah* (as *Azariah* told him, *v. 18*) but to the Priests, the sons of *Aaron*, who were consecrated to that office. But the Spirit of Christ moveth orderly, making us to contain within our own sphere, and to abide in the same calling wherein we were called, according to his commandment, *1 Cor. 7. 20. 24.* A heart acted by the Spirit can, with *David*, *Psa. 131. 1.* say, when he maketh his supplication to God, *O Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, neither do I exercise my self in great matters, or in things too high for me.* The Lord will have all things done decently and in order, and is not the author of confusion, *1 Cor. 14. 40. 43.* and as he leadeth not his children out of the way, So neither doth he bring them to dark and unpassible paths: it is not from him that weak Christians, especially these of the female Sex, do meddle and vex themselves with dark questions and intricate disputes; or, that the most strong and learned do dive too curiously in things not revealed, and in the secrets of the Almighty. He knoweth that to be an unprofitable task and too high for us, and will not have such new wine put into our old bottels, (till they be renewed) lest they break, *Matt. 9. 17.* 5. Satan, as a cruel exacter, may press thee to deal inhumanely and too rigorously,

rously, either towards thy self or others; and though such a work may seem to have much piety and zeal in it; yet, Sathan doth blow the bellows, Thus, if tender Christians should find a mighty impulse upon their spirits, to pray and fast so long and so frequently as to hazard their health, and to neglect their calling and not provide for their family, (ah! how rare a case is this? but though multitudes do spare and pamper their bodies, to the neglect and ruine of their soul; yet some have failed on the other hand, and then certainly) Sathan is not idle; it is he that helpeth forward this cruel zeal. Thus

(x) But the command given to him was only for trial; there being a ram provided for the sacrifice, Gen. 22. 13. but they could pretend no kind of command, Jer. 7. 31. Nay, the Lord will rather have no sacrifice then a work of mercy should be omitted, (far more then cruelty should be exercised) Mat. 12. 7. (y) Eccl. 8. 4.

he stirred up the Jews (in (x) imitation, as it would appear, of faithfull Abraham) to offer up their children; the Lord commanded them to sacrifice their beasts; but Sathan taught them, in a mad fit of zeal, thus to super-erogate and to sacrifice their sons and daughters: which oblations are said to be offered up to devils, as for other reasons, so haply for this, because Sathan did prescribe, require and stir them up thereunto, Psa. 106. 37. Thus also he moved Baal's Priests to cut themselves with knives and lancets till the blood gushed out, 1 King. 18. 28. Thus also he driveth blind Papists to afflict and scourge themselves, &c. and yet, this sort of cruelty is far more tolerable then the fury of Anabaptists and other Sectaries, who are mercifull to themselves, but mad against all others; in their zeal for God, they could embroil their hands in their neighbours blood, and cut off all others that they might enjoy their possessions, that they might live as Kings, there being no man to say to them, (y) What do ye? 6. Sathan moves tumultuously and confusedly; holy motions having no dependance one upon another, and tending to distract the heart in the present work, (whether that be prayer, hearing the word, &c.) must come from him who likes not the work, and who laboureth by all means (and that his hand may not be discerned, maketh choice of the most fair and specious, as being at such a season most probable) to mar the work in hand: but the Lord prepareth, strengtheneth, fixeth and enlargeth the heart, and inclineth it to perform His Statutes, and establisheth our goings, Psa. 10. 17. Psa. 127. 14. Psa. 40. 2. &c. He will not raise, but rather expell those

storms and mist of confusion, that disableth us in His work. 7. Sathan will suggest and stir us up to good, divinely and partially; Sathan, when he moveth us to do good being out of his own element, his motion cannot be equal and uniform; if to some good, not to all: yea, to some for this very purpose, that we may be stayed from following some other, haply of more concernment. However, he knoweth, that he who is guilty of offending in one point, is guilty of all, and that God will accept of none of our works, unless we have respect to all His commandments, *Psalm*. 119. 6. *James*. 2. 10. and therefore, if he can set one table of the Law, or any one commandment against another, he will not withdraw his help for enabling thee to bear that part of the burthen thou hast chosen. Thus some seem to be very zealous and diligent in religious performances, who neglect their relative duties as they are parents, masters, servants, neighbours, &c. not unlike to those who were taught of the Pharisees to be liberal in their contributions for pious uses, and undutifull to their indigent parents, *Mat.* 15. 5, 6. But there are others (and these not a few) who place all their Religion in the duties of the second Table, and they have no other charter to happiness but that they are good neighbours; they deal justly, they wrong no man, &c. and that Sathan may foster their delusion, he will allow them to be very strict and exact in their carriage towards men: Ah! what a monstrous kind of Religion must that be [to wrong men in nothing, and to rob God of all his service and worship, (except perhaps some outward performances without life and heat) to give to man all his due, and to God none of his?] O! but the Spirit teacheth and helpeth us to walk uniformly, and to (a) *exercise our selves alwayes to keep a good conscience, both towards God and man.*

(2) *Act.* 14.
16.

4. As to the rule, if there be a mistake as to it, if a false rule be set up, Sathan will stir us up to be very active for it, and zealous in our conformity to it, if he can get our zeal wrong placed, he will blow up the coal: it was he that stirred up *Paul* to be (a) *exceedingly mad against the Saints*, and violently to (b) *persecute them*: he did cherish that blind zeal in the Jews, who (*Rom.* 10. 2, 3.) laboured to esta-

(a) *Act.* 16.
11.

(b) *Act.* 22;
3:4.

(c) Gal. 4.

18.

(d) Job. 23.

22.

(e) Rom. 12.

12.

(f) Thus he laboured to divers the people from attending to Christ's Doctrine, by a most specious but unreasonable confession, that Christ was the holy One of God, Luk

4. 33, 34.

Thus also, while Paul and those who were with him were at prayer, he endeavoured to interrupt them by a fair testimony given to the Apostles and their doctrine by a confessed damsel, Act. 16. 16, 17. If Satan can steal away the heart from the present duty, he careth not by what means,

bliss their own righteousness; he did kindle that zeal in those false brethren, who (Gal. 4. 17.) sought to seduce and draw away the Galatians from the simplicity of the Gospel; and he it is who ruleth in Schismatics, Hereticks, and all kind of persecutors, making them mad against the truth and the sincere Professors of it: Nay, every motion (though upon the matter never so good) which tendeth to justify any sinfull course, to harden our heart therein, and to feed any distempered passion and lust, must come from the evil one; and from him it also proceedeth, that men are more zealous for their own inventions and superstitious customs, then for the commands of God. O! but the Spirit teacheth us to be (c) zealously affected alwayes in a good thing; to follow the direction of the word, and, with (d) Job, to esteem his commandments and the words of his mouth more then our necessary food: but, every anti-scriptural and erroneous motion is a satanical suggestion, proceeding, not from the spirit of truth, but from the father of lies, who can cite Scripture and pretend divine Authority (as he did to Christ, Mat. 4. 6.) to back his temptations.

5. As to the time. 1. Satan may move us to pray by fits and starts, but the Spirit only can make us (e) continue instant in prayer; we cannot pray alwayes unless we pray in the Spirit, Eph. 6. 18. carnal men will not constantly call on God, Job 27. 10. 2. Satan can move thee to pray unseasonably; as while a Judge is sitting on the Bench, and God calls him, and his place calls him to minister justice, if then he find an impression upon his spirit to desert his duty, and go to his closet and pray, he may fear lest Satan have a hand in it. Thus, while we are at (f) prayer, if we find some good motion suggested, which doth distract and draw away our hearts from the present work, if while we are hearing, conscience press us to read, if while we are attending our Masters business, conscience call us to employ that time which is not our own in some religious exercise, &c. these and the like are unseasonable motions, and cannot then proceed from him who hath appointed a season and fit time for every thing under the Sun, and made every thing beautifull in its time, Eccl.

Eccel. 3. 1. 11. But, as he maketh his servants to reap in due season, *Gal.* 6. 8, 9. he will also make them sow and bring forth fruit in the right season, *Psa.* 1. 3.

6. As to the *effect*. Though satanical suggestions may be very violent and impetuous, and forcibly press us to act; yet, they are fruitless, they bring no provision for the work, and for a right and spiritual way of performance; they are like water poured out upon the rock, not like the rain that falleth upon the valleys: Sathans mortels do not feed the soul.

1. Then, it leaveth no heavenly and spiritual impression upon the heart, it doth not enlarge and open it towards God, nor stir up self-abasing and heavenly affections. 2. Neither doth it give strength for doing the work to which it impelleth, in an acceptable maner; when the heart is thus stirred up to pray, it will continue dead and cold in the performance: for his motions often go no further then the imagination, fleeting there, and not descending to the heart to inflame it. But, 3. though they affect the heart, (as when they prevail they must do more or less) they quickly evanish and do not abide: though he would have us to work, that he may ensnare us in the work of our own hands, yet, he would not have our heart too much fixed on any good work; and therefore, when we stretch forth our hands, he with-draws his help and puts out his candle and the sparks he had blown up; he is fitly, in respect of his work, compared to lightning, *Luk* 10. 18. it is an evanishing flash quickly gone, which though it may awaken, yet it doth not warm the traveller. But, 4. though it abide and all the while, excite and press us forward, yet, it giveth no strength to do; it is like a whip or spur that driveth the weary beast, but addeth no help or assistance: And though thus the work may be done, yet, the maner of performance must be dead and formal, and (as to the end and motives) carnal and selfish; and is it any wonder to see Sathan have a hand in such good works? But thus we see, that Sathan dealeth with the Saints, as *Pharaoh* and the Task-masters once dealt with the Israelites, who urged them to work and make brick, but would allow them no straw or materials for the work, *Exod.* 5. 6, 7. But, 5. far less doth Sathans impression fir

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and dispose the heart for doing hereafter; a good work flowing from his breath is infectious, it rather deadneth and disposeth, then quickneth the heart, and rather begetteth a prejudice against holiness, then true love to it, because of its power (which then is not felt) and beauty, (which is not seen and perceived.) Far less, 6. is Sathans motion influential on the life and conversation; if it do not encline and dispose the heart for duties of the same kind and nature, it can hardly be imagined that it will extend its self further; if praying now thus, will not make thee love that exercise the better, and fit and dispose thee for praying hereafter, then, though the Lord in his wise providence, and for ends known to himself, should give what thou thus desiredst, that mercy would not prove a mean to increase thy love to him, neither wouldst thou labour to improve it for him, and lay it out for his honour; far less upon this account wouldst thou take heed to thy steps, as being loath to offend him, and say with him, *Psa. 116. 9. 12. 14.* What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits? I will pay my vows unto him, and in my whole carriage walk before him unto all (g) well-pleasing, being fruitfull in every good work. O! but the influence of the Spirit is soul-strengthening and enlarging; it is fruitfull, like the warm showers upon the mowen grass, *Psa. 72. 6.* and like that water poured upon the thirsty, *Isa. 44. 3, 4.* As he quickneth and stirreth us up to do, So he enableth and helpeth our weakness and infirmities, *Rom. 8. 26.* His influence is not partial, it extendeth to the whole life and conversation, to strengthen and *establissh us in every good word and work,* *2 Thess. 2. 17.* 1. To do. 2. To do well. And, 3. to do every thing that the Lord commandeth; if the Spirit help us to pray, he will help us to pray well and love well. Now a word of application.

(g) Col. 4. 10.

1. Use.

1. Be not puffed up because of some lively (as thou didst think) impressions on thy heart, driving thee to thy knees, and drawing thee to the throne; but ponder what hath been thy carriage while thou camest before the King, how thy heart was then enlarged, and what influence that duty had upon thy life and conversation, if thou didst vow and pay to the

the Lord, &c. Satan can transform himself, and then he is most dangerous and mischievous to the Saints; a white devil is an ill guest.

2. O! but take heed that this be not pretended, and made a cloak for thy resisting and grieving the Spirit of God. 2. Use. Though Satan at sometimes be permitted to blow the coal, that we may see to work, yet he is out of his own element when he stirreth us up to our duty; and seldom doth he meet with an occasion and opportunity, in which he may gain by our prayers and religious performances; and therefore unless his hand be manifestly discerned, let us follow and entertain such a motion, let us embrace and cherish what is good in it, not perplexing our selves by enquiring from what hand it did come; and though he did suggest it, yet if we could guard against his wiles and devices, following what is good in it, but not for the ill ends proposed by him, nor suffering our selves to be ensnared thereby; we might thus disappoint and befool him, making him hold the candle, and put to his hand to Gods work.

We now come to the second branch of the question, *viz.* By what marks and characters we may discern and distinguish spiritual and divine motions from natural and moral? How shall we know, whether the good motions that arise in our heart, and our activity in duty, proceed from the holy Spirit, or from, 1. conviction and some light in the conscience (though not yet sanctified and renewed) or, 2. from a melting ordinance, or remarkable dispensation of providence; or, 3. from our natural inclination and temperature (which though infected with the old leprosie derived from Adam, yet did impell some heathens) to the exercise of several morall vertues) or, 4. from education, custom, civility and meer morality, though a little elevated and assisted by the common operation and influence of the Spirit? Thus we might speak to several particulars, but we will not separate them, because to the present case they are much alike; neither will we now enquire when good motions do flow from those morall principles solitarily, there not being another, and more noble principle within, to give life unto them: and when there is another

another principle in the subject; though not then acting and producing them: But shall speak to the point in general; it being an easie task to, apply the several marks to the regenerat and inregenerat; especially, since, as to the question in hand, they often agree, and where there is a difference not palpable, we shall add a word of discrimination.

(h) Natural as opposed to spiritual and supernatural, and thus is comprehendeth all the particulars alleged in the question, in opposition to the assistance of the Spirit.

(i) Luk. 18. 11.

(k) 1 Kings, 22. 24.

(l) Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc scias alter.

Perf.

(m) 1 Kings, 30. 16.

1. Then (h) natural motions are empty and swelling, they puff up and make us proud; nature sacrificeth to it self, and in all its elevations, it elevateth it self, and maketh us with the (i) Pharisee, say, *I am not like other men*; and be ready, with (k) *Zedekiah*, to smite on the cheek such as would discover our delusion. Nature desireth many (l) witnesses to admire and trumpet its praise; behold (m) saith *Jehu* my zeal for the Lord. When the wind beateth upon empty barrels there is a great noise, but no echo cometh from the full. O! but true grace layeth the soul lowest, when it is most elevated; the Saints are like the vine-trees, the more fruit they bear, they are the more bowed down; the more they are enlarged in duty, the more they are straitned in their self-adorning imaginations. No doubt the Publican was then enlarged, when he durst not look up to heaven, and while he looked in to himself, saw nothing but sin; haply he had parts and great possessions, some name and place amongst men, and must he not be designed by these? nay, but whether he had any considerable portion of these worldly excellencies, we know not, he regardeth not, they were not worthy once to be mentioned; but his name, expressing all that he could say of himself, was this, *a sinner*, Luk. 18. 13. When the Lord admitted *Abraham* (as it were) to his privy councill, and revealed to him his purpose to destroy *Sodom*, did this puff him up? nay, but saith *Abraham*, though I have taken upon me to speak to the Lord, yet I am but dust and ashes, Gen. 18. 27. Its true, corruption may take occasion where no occasion is offered; and *Paul* may thus be in hazard to exalt himself thorough the abundance of revelations; but surely that is a very unnatural and unkindly fruit from such seed, and it cannot be said of grace, which is said of one (and

(and might be said of all) gift, *viz.* knowledge, to wit, that *it puffeth up*, 1 Cor. 8. 1. But on the contrary, while the Spirit of Christ doth act, and so far as he breatheth upon the soul, he doth mightily assist us in the pulling down of strong holds, and casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth it self, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. By this then we may (n) try the Spirits, whether they are of God or not. Every self-seeking, self-pleasing, self exalting, and self-embracing motion is naturall; though there would appear never so much zeal in it, that fire must either come from our own furnace, or from hell; but every self-abasing, self-loathing, self-fearing, yea, and despairing; but Christ admiring, exalting, loving and embracing motion, must proceed from the Spirit of Christ, who only can enable us to deny our self and follow him. These two are inseparably conjoynd, and both mutually concur here, the one helping to clear the other, and both joyntly the point in hand; the more we see our own vileness and misery, we will love and prize Christ the more. And therefore we may suspect every discovery of our own emptiness, as being only moral and philosophical, if it do not enlarge the heart towards Christ, and send us out to his fulness; and on the contrary, all our pretended love to Christ, and presumptuous closing with him, which doth not flow from conviction, despair and self-denial, is a meer delusion, Mark, 8. 38. If then we will judge by this infallible rule, what must we think of all the seeming devotion, tears, prayers, heart-meltings, enlargements, and specious performances of pharasaical Papists, and all other self-justifying merit-mongers? From this root also springeth another characteristical branch. If thou get a sight of thine own vileness, if thy assistance in duty doth not puff thee up, but rather maketh thee more humble and vile in thine own eyes, thou wilt return to God the sacrifice of praise for his goodness towards thee; if thou be sensible of thine own weakness and inability, thou wilt render to God the glory of all thine enlargements and actings: what cometh from God, leadeth in to him; but what floweth from nature, is confined within its own orbe, and will not look so high: As water in the pipe can ascend

(o) Luk. 18.
21.

ascend no higher then the head-spring, from which it did flow; So neither can our streams elevate us above the well from which they did spring. Its true, the proud Pharisee, while he would thank himself, can say, (o) *God, I thank thee*, he will passe a complement upon God, that thereby he may usher in his own praise; his work was not to give thanks to God, but to boast that he was a *non-such*. But we cannot from the heart praise God, till he hath renewed it; we cannot look so high, till he anoint our eyes.

a. The natural conscience, if it presse to do good, yet not all that is commanded; though it set thee a task, yet it limiteth and bindeth up thy hands; so far thou mayest go, but no further. Its true, there is here a latitude, according to the present measure of light and conviction, but alwayes there is some kind of limitation and restraint; so much only must be done as may serve to quiet and silence the clamours and accusations of the judge within; and for the most part a little will do the turn, some few outward performances, without life and affection; the popish *opus operatum*, if the work be done, no matter how it be done, from what principle, upon what motives, and to what end. Thus *Paul* before his conversion was a great zealot, conscience did press him to do many things upon the matter good, and he verily thought, with that Ruler, *Luk. 18. 12.* that he had perfectly kept the whole law, and lacked nothing, *Act. 22. 3. Gal. 1. 14.*

(p) a King. 10.
26.

(q) Natural motions to good, are, 1. rare and not usual; 2. they are weak and faint; 3. they are transient and quickly gone.

Though then he was (as afterwards, when his eyes were opened, he professeth) a blasphemer, a persecutor and injurious, 1 Tim. 1. 13. O! but the Spirit enlargeth the heart, and makes us (with him, *Pf. 119. 6.*) have respect unto all Gods commandments; he moveth to good, and to all good, without any reservation or limitation, and enableth us to do, and to do well, and especially to look to the inward frame and carriage of the heart, as knowing that to be the first thing the Lord asks for and mainly regardeth, *Prov. 23. 6. &c.*

3. Albeit sometimes there may be a flash of impetuous violence and fervency, as in him who (riding post for a kingdom) said, (p) *come and see my zeal for the Lord*; yet (q) ordinarily and habitually, and when such fits (which are

but

but evanishing flashes) are past, the stirrings and motions of an unrenewed heart, are faint, weak and remiss, a little blast will blow them away; how small a temptation did make that great zealot embrace *Jeroboams* calves, and turn aside from the law of the Lord? *ver. 31.* A little trouble and difficulty, loss, hazard or danger, will out-cry a natural conscience, and either stop its mouth, or prevail against its clamours; thus *Pilat*, though convinced of Christs innocency, and desirous to set him at liberty, will rather deliver him to be crucified. then lose the peoples favour; his conscience soon yielded to their importunity; the warning of a natural conscience, is transient and soon choaked; like to *Ephraim* and *Judah*, their goodness, which was (r) *as the morning cloud and the early dew*, which at the approaching of the Sun will quickly vanish and pass away: O! but the Spirit enableth us to stand fast, and be constant and immovable in the day of temptation, being in nothing terrified by our adversaries; and to obey the exhortation, *Phil. 4. 1. Phil. 1. 27, 28. 1 Cor. 16. 13. &c.* A proof whereof we have in that cloud of witnesses, who under cruel mockings, scourgings, bonds, &c. obtained a good report, *Heb. 11.* The Spirit fills the heart with (s) strong consolations, as an antidot against strong temptations, and by the power of his might out of weakness we are made strong, *Heb. 11. 34. 2 Cor. 12. 9.* Yea, when the quickning presence of the Spirit is withdrawn, yet his assisting and supporting presence continueth without change and alteration; except in some extraordinary cases procured by our pride, sloth, &c. in which there is, as it were, *deliquium gratia*, the new man is cast in a fownd; and yet if a discerning Physician did feel his pulse, he would find some motion; the man is not quite dead, his soul is in him, the fountain of life is not yet altogether stopt; *the seed of God yet remaineth in him, 1 Job. 3. 9.* But during that fit of lethargy, the old man rageth and tyrannizeth, improving that advantage to the utmost; and like that dumb devil, *Mark, 9. 17. 20, 22.* he often *teareth the man, and casteth him into the fire and the water to destroy him*, but the Lord at length pitieth him; and (as Christ there, *ver. 25.*) *rebuketh the*

(r) *Hos. 6. 4*(s) *Heb. 6. 14*

holy spirit, and restores the captive to his former liberty; but for ordinary, the Lord doth not with-draw the assisting, yea and in some measure quickning (yea even when he doth with-hold the comforting, sealing and witnessing) influence of his Spirit; therefore the Saints stand when others do fall away, their leaves are alwayes green, and they being planted in God's orchard, and from time to time watered by his hand, they constantly bring forth fruit in all seasons; while-as brambles, seeming to blossom for a season, shall quickly wither and decay, *Psa.* 1. 3, 4. What though the Saints be not alwayes alike enlarged in duty, and have not the same quickning, comforting and ravishing manifestations and influences? Yet, alwayes they have what is necessary to life and motion, and they are still advancing and going forward towards their home: and it is an evidence the sails were filled with a kindly wind, when the Vessel, without interruption (though not alwayes equally) is carried on, till at length it arrive at the desired haven. But, the whistle-wind that bloweth from a naturall conscience, though it may impetuously fill the sails and drive the Vessel by a confused motion; yet, it carrieth it not on towards the harbour, but after much tossing too and fro, the ship may be as far from the port as before that blast did come; and so, though it may trouble and molest, yet it doth not help the passenger: but he seldom meeteth with such a storm, which usually ariseth from some extraordinary occasion, and when it cometh, it is quickly over and gone.

4. The motions of a naturall conscience are ill seated and placed; as strangers, they are admitted to the utter court, but they are not taken in to the parlor; they may have some room as common trash in the house, but they are not like the jewels laid up in the cabin; as weeds, they may grow without the hedge, but they are not taken in to the garden; they sleet in the understanding, and get a candle set down before them there, and are attended by the practical judgment and the sentence of the conscience: but, though they come to the heart, and stand at the door and knock; yet, they cannot get entrance, the will and affections take up arms against them and hold them at the door; and thus, though they

come from within, yet in some respect they may be called violent and unnatural; the byass and inclination of the heart and will, (which is the great sovereign and lord of our *microcosme*) is against them: they are not unlike the faith of devils, which maketh them tremble, *Jam. 2. 19.* For, 1. as to their original and rise, they do not proceed from a kindly principle, but from slavish fear, conviction, and the challenges of conscience awaked by some outward rod or threatening, &c. As thus they come before they be sent for, they rush in without the consent of the will. Multitudes are ready here to mistake, and to esteem the light of conscience to be the choice and inclination of the will, thinking that they love God and the beauty of holiness, because the practical judgment doth dictate, that God is the most lovely object, and grace most desirable; the worst of men may have much light, together with much hatred and enmity at what they know to be good and right; and often they could wish that their light were darkness, that they might with the greater liberty and freedom follow their course, they could (1) wish that sin were duty, and evil good, and then there should be no better Saints and Perfectionists then they, they would become the greatest Puritans in the world. But, it is far otherwise with the children of God, they wait upon the breathings of the Spirit, and stir up the seed and habits of grace in the heart; they love their duty and delight to do the will of God, who hath not given unto them *the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and a sound mind,* 2 Tim. 1. 6, 7. Sinners are students in evil, and plot how they may do wickedly; but good thoughts arise in their mind without study and meditation, and therefore, as it were, casually and by chance, (as to their labour, care and providence) But the Saints study how to do that which is commanded, and would be well-pleasing and acceptable to God; and sinfull motions arise in them without their consent, and contrary to the desire of their heart: it is with them as it was with the Apostle, when they would do good, evil is present with them against their will, *Rom. 7. 21.* 2. As to their welcom and entertainment, as good motions do thus come to carnal hearts before they

(1) *Liketo the
sinner, who
lying on his
bed, said, O!
if hoc esset lar
borare.*

be sent for, So they are hardly used when they come; they are unwelcome guests, and there will be no peace till the house be freed of their trouble: and any service and entertainment they meet with for the time, is most uncheerfull and constrained; but if they be civil and modest, and call for no more but some external, easie and not costly service, as to pray, hear sermon, &c. some obedience for the fashion must be yielded, but without love and delight, the heart still protesting against the work, and while employed therein, saying with that people, *Amos 8. 5.* When will the Sabbath be gone, and the sermon ended? &c. Thou comest to the work unwillingly, and followest it with uncheerfulness and weariness, and goest away rejoycing that thy task is finished; but, if some inward work and heart-exercise be required, thou cannot away with such task-masters, thou must shake off that intolerable yoke, and some one way or other ease thy self of that wearysome burden; any Physician, though never so miserable and accursed, must be employed, rather than thou shouldst thus be held on the rack. If *Cain* be pricked in conscience, he will go build a City, and by business abroad labour to calm the storm within; *Saul* calls for musick, *Judas* runs to the halter, and *Felix* throws away the nipping plaister, &c. But it is matter of sad regrate to the Saints, when the Lord with-draws the awaking and quickning motions of his Spirit; and with what importunity will they pray the wind may blow? Ye may hear them, with the spouse, thus panting after the heavenly breathings, *Awake, O north Wind, and come thou south, blow thou upon my garden that the spices thereof may flow out*, Cant. 4. 16. and when the precious gale cometh, they will sit down under *Christ's shadow with great delight, but fruit will then be sweet to their taste*, Cant. 2. 3.

Obj.

Ans.

But you will say, may not the unconverted taste the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, and not only be enlightened, but also taste of the heavenly gifts? *Ans.* Yes, they may, *Heb. 6. 4, 5.* But, 1. that taste is rare and not usual. 2. It is superficial and not satisfying. And, 3. it is not pure and spiritual.

(u) 1. It is rare, and seldom attained by any reprobate, and then it is not a work of meer morality and nature, but must proceed from some (though not proper and peculiar to the Saints, nor sanctifying and converting) operation of the Spirit. Hence they are said to be made partakers of the holy Ghost, v. 4. And because it is thus singular and extraordinary, therefore a most terrible and extraordinary judgment is denounced against such as have thus been brought so near the harbour, and yet turn sail, that they shall never taste of the pardoning mercy of God, nor get grace to repent, v. 4. 6.

(u) A word in the by is that weighy case, concerning the difference between a temporary flash and the solid and pure joy of the holy Ghost.

But, 2. their taste is superficial and slight, in comparison of that which the converted find; it is not meat to them, it maketh them not grow; they taste spiritual things, as cooks do the meat which they dress for others; they could not live upon what they thus eat, but must have their meals beside; or rather as they who serve at the table, they find the smell of the meat but eat none of it; though some ordinary dish may be left for them, yet they must have nothing of the more delicate portion: So the unconverted may get something of the portion that is set on the childrens table, and find, as it were, a smell of the heavenly and spiritual gifts, which may so affect them as if they did eat, and is therefore called a taste, but yet nothing of that is let fall to them. Albeit some of the Israelites might taste of the pomegranates of the land of Canaan (brought (x) from thence by the spies) who never entered the promised land; yet, none (I think) ever tasted of the fruit of the heavenly Canaan, but must come thither, and enjoy the fruit of that place to the full; a stranger doth not intermeddle with their joy.

(x) Numb. 13. 23.

But then, whether that taste was real, or only called so, because it was much like, and did resemble a true taste; yet certainly, 1. it was but an evanishing flash, it was but a lightning, and no continuing heat flowing from a principle within to feed and give life unto it. And thus, 2. it was empty and weak, fleeting in the affections, and not reaching the heart to make an impression upon it; by it the streams (the affections of the heart) were somewhat enlightened and sweetened, but the fountain (and heart it self) was not bettered or altered there-

thereby, and nothing of its poison and bitterness removed; though the word was received with joy in the stony heart, yet that joy was rootless and soon withered; it did not pierce the ground, only some moisture from thence was conveyed to it, which the heat of the day did quickly did eat out, and it decayed, *Mat. 13. 20, 21.*

3. It is not pure and spiritual, there is much of self, and of a sensual interest, mixed with, and prevailing in it: and albeit it often surprizeth the man without any previous deliberation or endeavour, (who for the time useth not to reflect upon the motives and end) yet if then he did reflect, or if (y) *2 Sam. 18. 29.* after it is gone he would consider, he might, with (y) *Achimamaz*, say, that he saw a great tumult, but knoweth not well what it was. And, 1. he will not find that God was it's object, or if it did close with God, yet in a philosophical way immediately, and not in the Mediator Jesus Christ. 2. Not for himself, or because of any beauty and excellency discovered in him; there was much of self in it, and it did flow rather from what was expected by being with him, then by beholding of his face and enjoying himself; such a one would rather have heaven without God, then (if these could be separated) God without heaven. 3. Though it come (z) through an ordinance, yet it is not in the ordinance; there goeth not alongst with it a discovery of the beauty and amiableness of holiness, neither is the heart engaged to love and delight therein. But, any love to God, or to his work and service, which they seem to have, is selfish, *viz.* because therein something was enjoyed that was pleasant to their taste, and the heart was thereby raised up to expect some sort of pleasures hereafter, and to escape wrath and judgment; but they come not the length to rejoyce in the exercises of religion, because God was thereby honoured; and thus their joy is not a God-exalting and God-loving, but a self-seeking and self-delighting joy.

(z) *A soul that hath not delight in the exercises of Gods worship may yet find delight while employed in them, arising from some selfish and carnal motives.*

But supposing, that while we compare transient acts together, it were hard to shew the difference between such temporary flashes, and that more solid joy, which floweth from an inward and abiding principle created in the heart, and elevated

rated in its acting above the sphere of nature, by the sweet breathings of the Almighty. What if the Lord (to stay our curiosity, and to stir up our diligence, that we may not rest upon any measure here attained, &c.) would not clearly reveal, and in his word discover it (and experience here can have no place, if we speak of that special taste, which only they get, who are to get no more, since from that state they fall head-long into the blasphemy against the holy Ghost) it may banish anxiety, and satisfy us, that in their properties and effects they much differ; as, 1. that temporary flash doth not purifie and change the heart; 2. it doth not make us love God for himself, nor fall in love with the beauty of holiness; 3. it maketh not a man deny himself; 4. it doth not abide, &c.

You will say, the Saints themselves often complain, that the Lord quickly withdraweth the comfortable sense of his presence, that they do not alwayes (a) *tast and see* his goodness and beauty, that he often hideth his face, and they do not taste that joy and sweetness in the ordinances which they have formerly found; many a poor soul, may, with Bernard, say, *heu Domine Deus, rara hora, & brevis mora.* *Ans.* Yet it is not such a stranger to them as to others; though it go, yet it will come again, and from time to time renew its visits: and it never so withdraweth, but it leaveth some pledge behind it, till the marriage day, and then there shall be no more a separation and departing; the Bridegroom shall never withdraw his countenance, neither shall he any more withhold this Jewel; yea, and during the time of espousals, there is a difference between that claim the bride hath to it, and the title which any other can pretend; and that in respect, 1. of her right unto, 2. estimation, and, 3. enjoying of it: For, 1. it is her allowance, her husband hath left it to her in his legacy, *Job. 16. 22.* Secondly, it is not such a stranger to the Saints as to others, who when they think they have it, get but the shell and casket, they do not truly enjoy it, only they *think* and *seem* to have it *Sauveteur, Luk. 8. 18.* Thirdly, it is better secured to them, no man can take it from them, and they cannot themselves so lose it, that they shall

Obj.

(a) *Pl. 34. 8.*

Ans.

shall not find it again, if they will ask and make enquiry for it, *Job. 16. 22, 24.* Fourthly, when they have it, they prize and esteem highly of it. Fifthly, they labour to maintain and cherish it: Sixthly, it is their affliction to want it, and they long for it: And seventhly, they diligently seek after it in the use of every ordinance. But it is not so with carnall hearts; it is, 1. a mystery; and 2. for the most part a matter of mocking to them; they do not, 3. prize it; nor, 4. long for it; and if it come, 5. it surprizeth them in any ordinance (as it were) at unawares; and then, 6. they undervalue it; and, 7. do not labour to retain it; and thus, 8. it quickly vanisheth and passeth away, never to return again, and *the latter end is worse with them then the beginning,* *2 Pet. 2: 20, 21, 22.*

But to return, 5. It were no difficult work here to multiply particulars; as, 1. If such motions come regularly and in the use of the ordinances, if while thou art waiting and longing for the breathings of the Spirit; if it blow upon thy garden, while thou art saying, *awake, O north wind.* If fire fall on thy sacrifice (as it did upon *Elijahs*, *1 King. 18. 36. 37, 38.*) thou mayest safely conclude, that it came from heaven. 2. If these motions be followed with futable engagements and promises; if, as we are moved and stirred up to do good, so we are careful to do, and make conscience to follow that motion; and if, as we promise and pray well, so we live well and are circumspect in our walk; we do not go to work by fits and starts, but keep a constant course in our walking with God, and praying to him; here there is a concatenation, if one link of this golden chain be broken, the whole becometh useles, yea, loseth its name and nature, it is no more gold, but tinne or brass. He cannot pray well, who doth not live well, & *è contra.* But, 3. the work of the Spirit is sometimes so signal and remarkable, that it bringeth a full and clear evidence with it; as, 1. when it is so notable and eminent, that it elevateth the soul above the sphere of nature, and thus, *by his work* it self, the Lord discovereth his hand: 2. Though the work be not so eminent and ravishing, yet it may bring alongst with it a torch in its hand, to

let us see the place from which it came; and thus the Spirit witnesseth *with his work*; and whether his finger be discovered the one way or the other, whether he thus work, or witness, we need not an additional testimony to confirm what he hath deposed: There will then be no place for this case.

6. We might here apply most of the characters brought for clearing the former quæres concerning Sathans suggestions, which here will be as discriminative as they are there; as, 1. if these motions be spiritual, as to the motives and end, they cannot flow from nature; for no (b) agent can act beyond its own sphere. 2. If they stir us up to do in a right manner, &c. we will not resume the several particulars; only let us presse the last a little further. Now the motions of the Spirit do manifestly differ from our natural motions, as to their effect upon the heart. For, 1. they being weak (as we have shown, Chap. 3.) they can make no lively impression upon the heart, nor engage the affections; and thus they are often choked and repelled; yea, albeit when they (as in *Job*) are animated by self-interest and base carnall ends, Sathan also obstetricating and putting his to hand to help forward the work, albeit thus they become violent and impetuous, yet they are helpless; though they presse the heart to yield, yet they furnish no strength for doing in a sure and spiritual manner; though they may add vigour to the outward man in its natural actings; and thus also there may be a habit, facility and gift acquired for producing the like acts hereafter, yet the heart is no whit bettered, nor thereby made to fall in love with the beauty of holiness; the doing of one duty thus, doth not fit and prepare the heart for doing better, and more spiritually hereafter, but rather indisposeth it, by habituating it to do in a formal carnal manner. O! but the Spirit of God, is the Spirit of power, 2 Tim. 1: 7. who, as he exciteth us to do, so also assisteth us in doing, and enableth us to do well, and in an acceptable manner; he helpeth our infirmities, and supplieth our weakness, Rom. 8: 26. 1 Pet. 5: 10. Colos. 1: 11. He maketh us believe, and then

(b) Nihil
agit supra
spæram assi-
nitatis.

then speak, he will stir up faith to act, and thereby fit and prepare the heart to pour out its desires to God, *Ps. 116. 10*. Its true, the Saints may meet with streitnings, and by under much deadness, when the Spirit begins to move, but even then, they meet with secret strength and assistance, whereby they are supported to hold out, and not give over, nor to yield to the contrary suggestions of Sathan and the flesh; and therefore we should not alwayes measure the Spirit's help by sense & feeling, but when thus it cannot be so sensibly discerned; though it truly be afforded, yet we cannot make use of it, as a mark and sign for clearing the present case, till in the issue this mist and darkness be dispelled. 2. Then, wait, and the vision shall come, it shall not tarry; ere it be long, ye shall discern his hand to your comfort, and find a sweet sent and savour left upon the heart behind him; when he cometh, he will leave some myrrh upon the handles of the lock, which will make our fingers drop sweetly, *Cant. 5. 5*. Lastly, as natural motions do not *positively* amend and make the heart better, so neither do they *negatively* amend it, or make it less evil; as they add no good to it, so they take no evil out of it; though the acts of sin may be *restrained*, yet the habits are not *debilitated*; though the streams be stopt, yet the fountain still abideth full; though some branches be cut off, yet the bulk and root suffereth not prejudice, but may be all the while growing and enlarging it self. O! but the Spirit helpeth with might in the inner, as well as in the outward man, he helpeth us to do, not only some outward *acts*, but also to pull down the strong *holds* of Sathan, and every imagination and high *thing*, that would exalt it self against God, *Eph. 3. 16. 2 Cor. 10. 4. 5*. When the Spirit once beginneth to breath upon us, then sin (in root and branches) must (like the house of (c) *Saul*, after *David* did come to the throne) daily wax weaker and weaker.

(c) *Sam. 3. 1.*

Use 1.

(d) *1 Joh. 4. 1.*

Use, 1. You have need to (d) try by what Spirit ye are acted and led, and from whence the fire is brought that burneth your sacrifice; all is not gold that glisters, if your treasure be filled with brass in stead of good coyn, you are undone, the

the most miserable have something that looketh like current money, wherewith they rest satisfied, but when they bring it to the market, they are sent away empty; the worst of men have not only had some good motions, some light and pressing convictions, but also good affections; some pangs of sorrow and repentance, and some flashes of zeal, joy and holy desires: carnal men will have their fits of seeming devotion, and their good moods; you may look upon *Cain*, complaining and lamenting his misery, *Esau* weeping for the blessing, *Abah* humbling himself, *Felix* trembling, *Judas* repenting, and confessing his sin, *Jehu* in his zeal for the Lord destroying idolaters, *Herod* and the stony ground hearing the Word gladly, *Balaam* desiring to die the death of the righteous, &c. And therefore, as ye would not be deceived in a business of such concernment, put the matter to the tryal.

2. Here is matter of praise to God unto all eternity: 1172

O! let us (e) call to our soul, and summon all that is within us, to joyne in this work: let us invite the holy Angels to assist us, yea, let (f) heaven and earth, sea and land, with all their hosts (if they had a tongue to speak) joyne with us in praising our God for this his mervellous loving kindness towards the sons of men: that he will give his Spirit to be our leader and guide, our helper and comforter, to awaken and quicken us when we are dull, to corroborate and strengthen our fainting spirits; to help and assist us in our work, to comfort and refresh us when we grow weary, and thus every way to help our infirmities. O ye dull, faint, weak and disconsolated ones! consider what a master ye serve, and turn your complaints into songs of praises: But remember, that abused mercies exceedingly provoke: the nearer the Lord draws to us in his kindness, if we prove unthankfull, our punishment will be more heavy and grievous. Let us then look on the warning to the people of *Israel*, concerning that Angel (the great Angel of the Covenant) who should conduct them to the promised land, as if to day it

(e) Pf. 103. 1.
(f) Pf. 69. 34.

(g) In quā
venen Dei
veraciter est,
quis verus
Deus est
Gloss. inter-
lin. in loc.

Of the help and assistance of the holy Spirit.

were made to us in reference to this our blessed leader and guide to the heavenly Canaan; Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not, least he pardon not your transgressions; for my (g) name is in him, (saith the) Lord, Exod. 23: 21.

PART. II.

PART II.

Of the qualifications of an acceptable prayer.

Let the *levitical Priesthood* and mate-
 rial sacrifices did cease, and those sha-
 dows (a) vanish, after the (b) high
 Priest of our profession had once made
 his (c) soul an offering for sin, and by
 that one oblation, (d) perfected for ever,
 all that are sanctified; yet the Lord will
 have a (*spiritual Priesthood* to continue, and his people still
 to (e) offer up to him their daily sacrifices, and that (f) en-
 graving that was on the plate upon *Aarons forehead*, to be
 written upon our *hearts*, *Holiness to the Lord*. The pagan,
 pharisaical and popish way of worship, is an abomination to
 him; he (g) valueth not whited sepulchres and a (h) clean
 outside, he will not be mocked with fair professions, though
 accompanied with specious performances; if the heart be
 wrong all is naught, if it be not (i) renewed and consecrated
 to the Lord in holiness, to what purpose is the multitude of
 sacrifices? they are but vain oblations: Ah! Who hath re-
 quired these things at your hands? saith the Lord, *I sa. 1. 11,*
12, 13. His Israel must be holiness to him, holiness with-
 in and without; *every pot in Judah and Jerusalem must be*
holiness to the Lord, *Jer. 2. 3. Zech. 14. 21.* I would ask
 after no other evidence of a false Church then, with Papists,
 to plead for the *opus operatum*, the *work done*, however it
 were done, the meer carcasse of a performance void of all heat
 and life; as if it were acceptable service to him who must be
 (k) worshiped in spirit and truth, who calleth for (l) heart-
 service as too little, and without which he will accept nothing
 from our hands; though we did bestow all our goods to
 feed

(a) Heb. 3.

13.

(b) Heb. 3. 1.

(c) Isa. 53. 10.

(d) Heb. 10.

10, 14.

(e) 1 Pet. 2.

5.

(f) Exod. 28.

36. 38.

(g) Mat. 23.

27.

(h) V. 25.

(i) Eph. 4. 22.

(k) Joh. 4. 23.

(l) See Part 1.

Ch. 4.

Of the qualifications of an acceptable prayer.

feed the poor, nay, though we gave our bodies to be burnt, if the heart and affections go not along, if it be not a free-will offering, *it is nothing*, 1 Cor. 13. 3. Hypocritical and formal Professors from time to time have been very frequent in duties, and said many prayers; but yet, to this day never (m) (m) *Pla. 61. 3. poured out their heart before the Lord*; their frequency was not accompanied with fervency, their sacrifices lay cold on the Altar, there came no fire from heaven to kindle them; and will the Lord accept such empty and deceitfull oblations? he cannot away with them, they are an abomination unto him; and what matter of lamentation is it, that so much precious ointment should be thus wasted, and such a noble work prove so fruitless and unprofitable, that so excellent and promising an exercise, if rightly performed, should be a miscarrying womb. We are ready to complain of the Lord, that he will not hear nor hearken to our cry, whereas the fault is in our selves, we will not cry; he valueth not the voice of our tongue: but if the heart did speak, he would quickly hear and answer; if we would seriously reflect upon the frame of our soul, and diligently ponder our wayes and work, we would find, nay, Gods own people and honest servants might see and be convinced, that too often they send an unfaithfull messenger to the throne, who doth miscarry and mar our cause, because he cannot speak, and is not acquainted with the language of the court. And thus we receive not because we do not ask; our asking is no asking in Gods account, because we do not ask aright, and do not seek God in that way in which he will be found: and therefore it concerns us to take heed what kind of prayers we offer up to God, lest our labour be lost and the Lord provoked against us, while we are ready to conceive that we are doing him good service.

And for the direction of such as would not trade with heaven with counterfeit coyn, and who desire not to be found amongst the number of those (*) cursed mockers, who do the work of the Lord negligently and deceitfully, we purpose now (in the Lords strength) to enquire after the *qualifications, conditions and properties* of an acceptable and prevailing prayer. We would not have these terms to be pressed in

(n) Jer. 48.
19.

in their strict and philosophical sense, as if we minded now to enquire what did belong to prayer as *essentials*, what only as *accidentals*, *reciprocal* or not *reciprocal*; but having in the first part of this Treatise, spoken to those things that more properly serve to the opening up the nature of prayer, we shall now take a view of those things that belong to the manner of performance, and which are so necessary to its prevalence and acceptance. All which, if we duly ponder, will be found (as it were) to flow from the two last particulars, mentioned in the *description*, (o) viz. the purchase of Christ and the work of his spirit, which therefore were placed in the first Part, as being the fountain and original of all the rest, (and the sole ground of the prevalence of our prayers) and would not conjoin them with the streams and their effects, which now come to be considered here; albeit otherways we deny not, that these two also may be reckoned among the conditions and requisits of prayer, yea, and in some such improper sense, all that belongs to its nature and essence, and every branch of the definition may be called a condition, though hardly in any sense a property and (p) qualification (which three may here be promiscuously used) of prayer. And though the merit of Christ and the help of the Spirit might be called conditions, yet they are no intrinsic part of our work, though our prayers must be, as it were, animated and enlivened by them: but now we are to speak of that which must be wrought by us, and be from us, (though supposing the assistance of the Spirit whereby we are enabled thereunto) and therefore the disparity is manifest.

But, that we may no more contend for words or method in this discovery of the qualifications of an acceptable prayer, we shall not enumerate all and every one, for scarce is there any one that doth concur, and is required in any (q) spiritual performance, that may not, some one way or other, have place here; but we shall only (r) name some few as being

1. *Fideliter*. 2. *Pure*. 3. *Humiliter*. 4. *Instanter*. 5. *Perseveranter*. 6. *Amor*. 7. *Quomodo*. 8. *Quando*. 9. *Ubi*. 10. *Quibus*. 11. *Auxiliis*. 12. *Cur*. 13. *Quomodo*. 14. *Quando*. 15. *Ubi*. 16. *Quibus*. 17. *Auxiliis*. 18. *Cur*. 19. *Quomodo*. 20. *Quando*. 21. *Ubi*. 22. *Quibus*. 23. *Auxiliis*. 24. *Cur*. 25. *Quomodo*. 26. *Quando*. 27. *Ubi*. 28. *Quibus*. 29. *Auxiliis*. 30. *Cur*. 31. *Quomodo*. 32. *Quando*. 33. *Ubi*. 34. *Quibus*. 35. *Auxiliis*. 36. *Cur*. 37. *Quomodo*. 38. *Quando*. 39. *Ubi*. 40. *Quibus*. 41. *Auxiliis*. 42. *Cur*. 43. *Quomodo*. 44. *Quando*. 45. *Ubi*. 46. *Quibus*. 47. *Auxiliis*. 48. *Cur*. 49. *Quomodo*. 50. *Quando*. 51. *Ubi*. 52. *Quibus*. 53. *Auxiliis*. 54. *Cur*. 55. *Quomodo*. 56. *Quando*. 57. *Ubi*. 58. *Quibus*. 59. *Auxiliis*. 60. *Cur*. 61. *Quomodo*. 62. *Quando*. 63. *Ubi*. 64. *Quibus*. 65. *Auxiliis*. 66. *Cur*. 67. *Quomodo*. 68. *Quando*. 69. *Ubi*. 70. *Quibus*. 71. *Auxiliis*. 72. *Cur*. 73. *Quomodo*. 74. *Quando*. 75. *Ubi*. 76. *Quibus*. 77. *Auxiliis*. 78. *Cur*. 79. *Quomodo*. 80. *Quando*. 81. *Ubi*. 82. *Quibus*. 83. *Auxiliis*. 84. *Cur*. 85. *Quomodo*. 86. *Quando*. 87. *Ubi*. 88. *Quibus*. 89. *Auxiliis*. 90. *Cur*. 91. *Quomodo*. 92. *Quando*. 93. *Ubi*. 94. *Quibus*. 95. *Auxiliis*. 96. *Cur*. 97. *Quomodo*. 98. *Quando*. 99. *Ubi*. 100. *Quibus*.

Some antecedent and previous conditions of prayer.

most necessary or most slighted and neglected, and upon which the rest do hing, and will not readily be wanting when conscience is made of the other: among which, *faith* being the most proper and deserving a more full discovery, we shall speak of it at greatest length. But, for our more clear and distinct procedure, the qualifications and requisites of prayer may be divided into three ranks. 1. Some are previous and antecedent. 2. Some are concomitant and belong to the performance of the duty, and must go along with it. 3. Others are consequent and must follow after.

CHAP I.

Some antecedent and previous conditions of Prayer, which should be observed before and while we are drawing nigh the throne of Grace. As, 1. some enquiry after our state. 2. Circumspection in our walk. 3. A praying disposition and spiritual frame of heart. 4. Preparation. 5. Right ends.

Psal. 50. 16. Unto the wicked God saith, what hast thou to do — to take my covenant in thy mouth? &c.

Jam. 4. 3. Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss that you may consume it upon your lusts.

Psal. 10. 17. Thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause shine ear to hear, &c.

BE not rash with thy mouth, (either (a) in vowing or praying) and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, Was the Preachers caveat, *Eccles. 5. 2.* which should be carefully heeded by us in all our addresses to God, and may be laid as a foundation to what we are to say here; none will draw nigh to the King, but as he will labour to order his words when he is admitted to speak, So he will premeditate, not only what he should say, but also who he is that thus taketh upon him to interceed and deal with such a honorable person: But, ah how few do thus prepare themselves to meet the great King? And hence, too many, through their negligence,

(a) As expostions upon good grounds extend the word, (as) Diodat, annotat. on the Bible in fol. Amsterd. an. 1640. English Divin. Pemble, Cotton.

negligence, irreverence and precipitancy in the worship of God, instead of a sweet savour; do offer up to him the *sacrifice of fools*, Eccl. 5. 1. But, that our service and oblation may prove acceptable, let us prepare for that work which is so far above us, and for which we are so unfit and unsufficient, a Cor. 3. 5.

And, 1. we would look after the qualification of the person, what is thy condition and state, and under what relation thou standest towards God, whether the old enmity be yet removed, and whether thou, who goest to knock at the gate of heaven, be a friend or an adversary, a son or a stranger; not as if thou shouldst alwayes dispute and question thy state, but that thou shouldst bring thy state to the touch-stone, and try and (b) *examine whether thou art in the faith*, and thus (b) a Cor. 13. once put thy relation and spiritual condition out of question, which may be a constant and abiding ground of confidence and encouragement to draw nigh to God, untill some new storm, either raised by Sathan, or flowing from thine own bowels, do blow out that light, till either thou sin away that evidenee, or the enemy steal it away from thee. But it concerns us much to know our interest in God, and that we are in a state of favour and friendship, lest he prove a consuming fire, and we as stubble, if we approach to him in our sins. Albeit the Lord be no respecter of persons, yet the prayer of the (c) wicked is an abomination unto him, and the prayer of the upright his delight, Prov. 15. 8. He who will not hear sinners, Job. 9. 31. yet will not send the righteous away empty, Jam. 1. 16. For, albeit in matter of justice, we may not ask, who? nor respect the persons of men, we must not show favour to our nearest relations, no not to the poor, Exod. 23. 3. Lev. 19. 15. yet in bestowing of courtesies, and in acts of bounty, meer-pleasure and good-will, the consideration of the person may well have the first place, Psa. 16. 3. Gal. 6. 10. If sinners could carry their suit in point of equity and justice, the Lord would do them no wrong, he would not send them away empty: but since none, not the best of men, is able to maintain such a plea, but he of his meer mercy doth give to whom he will, shall he be un-

(c) Which Socrates, though a Pagan, did acknowledge, see Baldwin's moral Philos. book, 9. ch. 3.

righteous in shewing favour to his servants, while he re-
sisteth to satisfy the desire of strangers and enemies.
Hence,

1. *Real.*

The first ground of the point, is, because our duties and
services, our good works and prayers, cannot merit and
deserve any good from God; they cannot justify our persons,
nor procure a pardon for our offences, how then shall they
be able to purchase new favours? The popish doctrine, con-
cerning the merit of our works, and our justification there-
by, is detestable; its a soul-destroying dream of Proud Pha-
riseses; the fruit cannot make the tree good, but the tree

(d) See Part
2. chap. 9.

(e) Cajetan
his observati-
on (which he
repeats) on
the place is the
more remark-
able, because
of the author,
he being
a Papiſt.

Externa (&
dem de inter-
niſdicendum)
oblationes
(acquit ille)
non sunt Deo
grata (eun-
dum c. 14.
ſed ratione of-
ferentium pla-
cent vel di-
ſplicent.

(f) 1 Chron.
29. 14.

(g) Mentem
offerentis non
oblationem
attendit, gloſ.
interlin. in
Gen. 4. 4.

must first be good, before it can bring forth good fruit, *Mat.*
7. 17. Thou canst not pray acceptably till thy heart be renew-
ed, till thou get strength from above, and till a (d) principle
of life be infused and the Spirit concur with it, and help thee
to pray according to the will of God, *Rom.* 8. 26. 27. The
Lord first (e) had respect to *Abel*, and then to his sacrifice,
Gen. 4. 4. (which was not the cause, but an effect, evidence
and witness of his righteousness, *Heb.* 11. 4.) we cannot
offer to the Lord but of his (f) own, he must give unto us
before we can render unto him; he must draw up our supplica-
tion, and put it into our hands, else we know not what to
say when we come before him, and though we could order our
words yet so long as the heart doth keep and entertain its old
enmity against God and his holy commandments, he will not
be mocked with fair pretences, nor accept of his supplication,
whose heart plotteth, contriveth and breaths after treason
and rebellion against him. We must first lay down our
weapons, and accept his pardon, before he will accept our
supplications and fulfill our desires: And therefore, if thou
refoleyst still to hold up the former feud, and only comest to
God in a strait, and to serve thy turn, I may appeal to thy
own conscience (if there be any reliques of light and ingenuity
left there) whether it were not a righteous thing with God to
deal with thee according to thy folly.

2. God doth not so much value our work and perfor-
mance, as the (g) fountain and principle from which it doth
flow, and the end and scope at which we aim; but unill the
heart

heart be renewed, thou canst not act from a principle of love, nor make his will and command thy motive, nor honestly aim at his glory; but thy motives must be carnal, and thy end self-interest: thou canst not act spiritually, nor bring our fruit to God, till thou be ingrafted into the true and lively vine, the Lord Jesus, *Joh. 15. 5*. And therefore thy prayers and performances, though never so specious, must be an abomination to him; *self* being thy idol, before which thou fallest down in every act of worship, thou seekest not God for himself, but for thine own base carnal ends, which if thou couldest otherwise obtain, thou couldst with all thy heart bid farewell to God, his worship and service; he should hear no more of thy prayers and supplications. And thus, as the supplicant is not the same, not a son, but a stranger, so the supplication is not alike; there is a great difference and inequality in the work it self; the Saints pour out other kind of prayers unto God then the unregenerate; and therefore no wonder the success be not the same, albeit there may be much art and eloquence, and great variety of pertinent expressions, yet till the heart be renewed, our censers, instead of incense, must be filled with such loathsome filth, as must make our sacrifice abominable. The old root doth continually send out, and communicate so much venom to all its branches, that no fruit can be gathered from thence, but what is full of deadly poyson; a polluted heart will so pollute and infect all our actions and performances, that they must be naught in Gods account: hence, *1 Kings, 8. 38*, this leprosy, because of it infection, is called the *plague of the heart*.

But though these two be very considerable, 1. the state of the person; for what father will not hearken more to the cry of his son and child, then to the voice of a stranger and enemy? 2. the quality of the work; for who would say brass in the ballance with gold? Yet these are not the main grounds of discrimination and difference, as to the present case, concerning the acceptance and audience of the one and not the other; but that must be brought from another root, which now we shall only name, as being already more fully

opened, viz. 1. the assistance and concurrence of the Spirit; 2. the merit and intercession of Christ. Hence,

A third reason of the point, may be this; we cannot pray acceptably without the help and assistance of the Spirit, unless he enable us to speak and teach us what to say; ah! what can we plead upon the account of any (though never so eminent) work as coming from us? Hence, saith a (b) reverend Divine, *God no more respects the prayers of the wicked (as being offered up by themselves, without the concurrence of the Spirit) then he respects the lowing of Oxen, or the grunting of Hogs.* None have the Spirit of supplication, but such

(b) Mr. Fenner Sacrif. of the faith: pag. 6. and pag. 51.

(i) Nay Suarez, though a Jesuit, and a great patron of the merits of congruity, yet granteth, orationem non esse impetratoriam ex vi promissionis nisi ex fide procedat, quia promissio non fit orationi nisi procedat ex fide, Suarez. ubi supra, cap. 24. sect. 3, 2.

(k) Zeal. Christi. pag. ult.

Elie 2.

as have the Spirit of adoption; and therefore we cannot be assured of the success of our prayers, till our son-ship and adoption be cleared and sealed to us. See, Part 1. chap. 9.

4. All the promises, are *yea* and *amen* in Christ; and therefore whatever the Lord, out of his general bounty and pity, and by the hand of a common providence, may bestow upon an *Abab*, fasting and humbling himself, and upon an *Ishmael*, crying and weeping, yet they had no covenant right to what they did receive, nor could they lay claim unto, or plead a (i) promise in prayer; and therefore, though at a venture they might pray, and God out of his sovereignty, and by way of prerogative, might answer their desires, yet they could not promise to themselves (as not having an interest in the promises) that their prayers would prove successfull. Christ is the alone way to the Father, and he is our altar, and therefore untill we be united to him, we have not access to the throne; and can offer up no acceptable sacrifice. Nay, saith (k) reverend Mr. Love. *God is as well pleased with the barking of a dog, as with the prayers of a Christless man.* See Part 1. chap. 8.

Use. Whenever then thou goest to Gods door to knock and cry for an almes, expect to meet with this question: who art thou that calls? whether art thou a friend or an enemy? what is thy plea? who brought thee hither? what interest hast thou in the place? canst thou produce the Kings bond? did his Spirit fetch thee? hast thou any claim to the purchase of his Son, &c. Is too ordinary, not to consider or regard

regard what prayers we offer up to God, but to rest on the *opus operatum*, the work done, however it be performed; but yet it is more ordinary not to enquire after the person his state and condition; many care not *what* they offer, as all gross hypocrits; but even amongst the Saints there are not a few, who seldom ask, *who* art thou who takest upon thee to sacrifice to the Lord? It is indeed an evidence of love & respect to provide the best of the flock, and not dare to bring the halt and the lame; but that's not enough, thou must also take heed in whose hands thou put'st it: under the law none durst offer but the Priests, who were consecrated to that office; and there is a Priest-hood under the Gospel, by which only acceptable sacrifices can be offered, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Rev.* 1. 6. If thou durst appear before the throne of Justice, and wert able to carry thy cause in point of law and equity, then thou mightest order thy cause, and not fear, (1) *the judge of all the earth would do right.* But since, we have nothing of our own to hold out, but sin and misery, indigence and wretchedness; and (like beggars) our sores and manifold infirmities, we might be the more hopefull to carry our suit, if we could plead our relation to the place: Supplicants do not prevail with God, as an *orator* with the hearers, but as *children* with their father; the sigh and groan of the (m) child will move the tender father more, then all the art and eloquence of a stranger.

2. A word of caution; and, 1. let not this discourage the (n) children of light, while they are walking in darkness; do not thou, O disconsolate Saint! who art (o) panting after the Lord, as the Hart after the water-brooks, do not thou make this a plea for thee to run away from the throne; ye that fear the Lord, need not fear, ye are called and allowed in this sad case *to trust in the name of the Lord, and to stay upon your God,* Isa. 50. 10. What though it be night with the soul, so that thou canst not see and discern thy interest in God, yet he knoweth who are his own, and will hear his children when ever they cry to him; and will *own* them and answer their requests, while they are ready to apprehend that they are cast off, *Isa.* 49. 14, 15, 16. Neither, 2. should this

(1) Gen. 18.

25.

(m) *Videmus*

vulgo parentes

magis delecta-

ri voluissent

infantia in-

fantium, quam

universa elo-

quentia homi-

num eloquen-

tissimorum;

pater autem

noſter celeſtis

magis obſer-

vat ruditate ac

infantia no-

ſtra, qui nu-

mus ejus filii,

quam, &c.

Rolloc. in

Joan. 4-

Use, 2.

(n) *Isa.* 50. 10.

(o) *Pl.* 42. 1

this discourage such as are in the pangs of the new birth, who have taken their leave of their old lovers, and are on the way to Zion; whatever thou hast been, if thou honestly now desirest to offer up thy self to the service of God, and to give him thy heart, he will not reject thee, *Job. 6. 37. Ezek. 18. 21. 27. 28.* yea, though there be much refuse and filth mixed with thy sacrifice, and much unwillingness joyned with thy desires, so that thou hast but a *(p)* *nilting* *Willing*, thy soul being in a confusion, by reason of the sad complaints from thy lusts and former lovers, who are unwilling to be divorced: yet thou mayest draw nigh to God, and look up to him for help, and pray that he would stretch forth his hand and pull thee out of this snare, and having brought thee forth, would so establish thy goings, that thou mayest never look back again to *Sodom*. Its true, that till thou hast escaped, thou canst not lay hold on the Covenant, thou canst not in faith *plead any promise*, till thou be *(q)* *in the faith*. But yet, what knowest thou, O mourning sinner I but the promise may belong to thee, the absolute promises to shew mercy, love freely, to renew the heart, &c. And certainly God will accomplish what he hath promised, and of his free grace may make use of thy prayers, as a mean to that end. See *Part. 1. chap. 5. sect. 3.*

Only let this word allarme all secure sinners, who dare draw nigh to God with their supplications, while they are resolved to follow their old course and trade of sin; who dare call God Father, and yet are not afraid to offend him, who dare supplicate the King with their weapons in their hand, and while they purpose to continue in their rebellion. Unto such desperate wretches, thus saith the Lord, *what hast thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and casteth my words behind thee?* *Ps. 50. 16. 17.* Its a dishonour to God, that such should take his name in their mouth, that such should call upon him, and lay any claim to his covenant and promises. O I consider this all ye that forget God in your life and conversation, least, notwithstanding all your prayers and seeming devotion, he come against you and tear you in pieces, while their will be none to deliver. *Ps. 22.* Hence,

(p) ὁδὸς ἡ
 λωντες, Eurip.
 apud Erasim.
 in Ghib no-
 lens volens
 vel potius
 ἡλὼν ἀκον-
 τισὶς θυμῷ,
 Homer vo-
 lens nolente
 animo.
 (q) 2 Cor.
 13. 5.

2. Qualification.

3. As the fountain must be purified, the streams should be clean; its not enough that our state be good, but our walk must be answerable: as our persons must be reconciled, and the habits of grace and sanctification must be rooted in the heart, so the fruits thereof must appear, and holiness must be expressed in our life and conversation. In the most dark and impure times, this was an acknowledged principle, *God heareth not sinners*, Joh. 9. 31. Job, 27. 9. Ezek. 8. 18. Prov, 1. 28. Micah, 3. 4. Isa. 1. 15. Jer. 14. 12. &c. Hence, Solomon in that solemn prayer, 1 Kings, 8. doth once and again caveat and limit his intercession for the success of prayer, which should be poured out in, or towards that house he had built for the worship of God: *If they turn from their sin, and know the plague of their own hearts, if they confess and repent, &c. ver. 33, 35, 37, 47, 48.* Under the law, if any man in his uncleanness durst offer to sacrifice, or offer to meddle with holy things, he was to be cut off from the presence of God, *Leviticus* 22. 3. &c. Of how much sorer punishment (suppose ye) shall he be thought worthy, who dare draw nigh to God, and and presume to offer a spiritual sacrifice in his moral uncleanness, whereof the natural was only a shadow, and therefore was it so severely forbidden, to shew how the holy Lord doth abominate and will avenge the other. Such as dare come before the Lord in their sins, are like a thief that would present himself before the Judge with thefang in his hand. *There is no man in his right wits (saith (r) one) would come as a suiter unto his Prince, and bring his accuser with him, who could prove and iustifie to his face his treason and rebellion. Much less would any man dare to come with the (s) weapon in his hand, wherewith he had killed the Kings only Son and heir, and resolving their wits to offer violence to the King himself. And there is no (t) Adulteress so shamelessly impudent, as to*

(r) Mr. Downam
(p. arm.
part. 3 lib. 2.
chap. 4.

(s) The sins of Gods people were the murders of the

Prince of life, and though the high and lasty one be out of the reach of sinners, yet every sin is accounted to be imperperatively Deicide. And no thanks to him, who resolutely and deliberately sins against God, that his evil extendeth not to God. (t) Sin is frequently (and most fitly) in the Scriptures compared to whoredom, and our Lusts are called our lovers.

Supplicat

Some antecedent and previous conditions of prayer.

supplicat her husband, having still her lover in her armes, purposing yet to follow him. But if any were so desperate, what success might they expect? Would not such a Judge, King or Husband, be avenged of those wretches, not only because of their crimes, but also because of this their impudence and mockery? And yet, alas! inconsiderate sinners are not afraid to deal thus with the great God; but though he long forbear, yet vile pot-sheards will not alwayes be suffered thus to mock their Maker; and though the Lord will not utterly cast off his elect ones, but will at length pull them out of the snare, yet their sins will provoke him to hide his face for a while, and not to hearken to their prayers, so long as they stop their ears at his reproof, and will not turn from their iniquity, *Pf. 66. 12. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.* Though now I be assured of my reconciliation and of Gods favour and love, and that he hath attended to the voice of my prayer, yet (saith he) if I should sin against him, he would turn away my prayer and refuse to answer my desire. *God will not speak peace to his Saints, if they return to folly, Pf. 85. 8. Then, and only then, shall I not be ashamed and disappointed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.* *Pf. 119. 6.* As if the Psalmist had said, however the swine of the world will come from the mire, and in their filth draw nigh to thee, yet I would not have the fore-head, I would blush, be ashamed and confounded to look up to thee, unless I laboured to walk before thee in all well-pleasing, taking heed to my steps, and making thy law the rule of all my wayes. Its disputed, whether gross sins, committed against knowledge and conscience, be inconsistent with grace, so that when beleevers thus fall, they fall away from the state of grace and justification? Now though we dare not go alongst with them who stand for the affirmative; yet we may safely affirm, that such sins (yea and every known and allowed sin, whatever be the matter and object; and though it were never so latent and hidden, and so not scandalous) do so far make a breach upon the blessed state of justification, as that the priviledges and comforts thereof are suspended, untill the sinner renew his repentance, and

and forsake and be ashamed of the evil of his doings. What did it profit the poor Prodigal, that there was bread enough in his fathers house, till he came to himself and arose and went to his father? *Luk. 15. 17, 18.* Believers, ye are great heirs, you have great priviledges, and this is not the least, you may *ask what you will, and it will be given you.* O! then, be not so foolish as to sin away your own mercies.

But, though these two be necessarily required, and the success of prayer doth very much depend upon them; yet, they are remote, and, as it were, indirect conditions and qualifications of prayer, as belonging rather to the person, then to the duty it self, and being required rather in him who prayeth, then in prayer it self, as any cause, part, property or effect of it: But now we come to speak of those requisites which have a more immediat influence upon, and reference to, this performance.

3. Then, if thou wouldst pray acceptably and successfully, labour to maintain a praying frame and disposition in thy heart; and let not thy lusts or worldly cares deaden and extinguish that live-coal which must inflame thy sacrifice. And thus some interpret the exhortation *to pray alwayes and without ceasing*, *Eph. 6. 18. 1 Thess. 5. 17.* as if thereby were commended to us, to keep our heart in a continual fitness and readiness to approach to God, and present our requests to him; and it is granted on all hands, that that is implied in the words, though they hold out some more (as shall appear, *Part 3.*) For, how can he pray alwayes (supposing that universal particule only to import all seasons and occasions) who doth not constantly preserve this praying temper and disposition; and who is not alwayes fit and in readiness to go about the duty: may not a call and fit season tristle with his unfitness and indisposition? when the Instrument is out of tune, the Musician cannot play, or he will make bad melody.

You will say, but Ah! how shall that little coal be kept in, it being exposed to so many storms and blasts, both from within and without? *Ans.* What we are to say, *Part 3.* concerning the cure of deadness and wandring thoughts in prayer, may be helpfull for removing and with-holding unfitness and

indisposition to pray: and now we would only commend these three preservatives of this good disposition, and remedies of an evil one, viz. 1. Exercise. 2. Meditation. 3. Watchfulness; of which in the following requisite.

4. *Qualification.*

The fourth previous condition (and it hath yet a more immediat and actual influence upon the duty then any of the former) is preparation, the work is high and great, it is difficult and of much concernment; we have much lying at the stake, and of our selves we are unable and ready to miscarry: we had need then to (*u*) gird up the loins of our mind, to call to our (*x*) soul and all that is within us to make ready for the work, to bring in provision for it, and to look about us, but especially above us, for assistance and supply, and to improve that word, *Psa.* 10. 17. and say, *Lord, prepare my heart, that thou mayest cause thine ear to hear.* We

(u) 1 Pet. 1.

13.

(x) Pl. 103.

(y) Job. 37.

22.

(z) Levit. 10.

3.

(a) Eccl. 5. 1.

(b) Hence the proverb, accedere ad rem illotis manibus, when we go about any business without due preparation.

(c) An heavy and slow flying bird,

have to deal with him who is of (*y*) terrible majesty, and who must be (*z*) sanctified in all them who draw nigh to him in any point of worship; and therefore we would take (*u*) heed to our steps while we are approaching the throne. The very pagan Priests, before they did offer their material sacrifices to their idol-gods, would make some kind of preparation, by purging and (*b*) washing their body, especially their hands and feet, and by abstinence from diverse kinds of meats; and shall we dare to offer up spiritual sacrifices to the true God without pre-meditation? And if we would be at some pains before hand to prepare our hearts, the work would prove more, 1. easie; 2. sweet; and, 3. successful. Our (*c*) Buzzard-like hearts cannot instantly get upon the wings, and rise up from the world (in which they are often so deeply plunged) without more ado, and fly up to heaven: nay, as it is harder to raise a great bell, then to ring it after it is up and brought in motion; So often, it is more difficult to raise up the heart, and to prepare it for spiritual duties, then to perform them when it is brought to a heavenly frame; and if we could alwayes maintain that heat, we needed not be at the pains to blow at the coals for recovering of it: But, Ah! our stony hearts are no sooner removed from the fire, but by degrees they return to their native coldness; and therefore,

therefore, whatever other means we make use of for preserving a praying disposition, and for fitting and preparing our selves for that solemn work, we would not suffer the heart to be too much cooled and deadned, through (d) dis-use and too long biding away from the place where fire from heaven useth to descend. If the trades-man, through neglecting his calling, suffer his tools to rust, he will make but bad work when he cometh to use them; O! but, as in other arts, so also in this our heavenly trade, *frequency* in acting, diligent use and exercise, begetteth both *facility* and *delight*; if we were not too great strangers to a heavenly communion, good thoughts and spiritual meditation would become more familiar; kindly; and (as it were) natural to us; and therefore, frequency in doing is not the least part of our preparation for duty, to which we shall now only add the other two we promised here to speak to, *viz.* Watchfulness and Meditation.

2. Then,

We must *watch unto prayer*, Eph. 6. 18. 1. Our spirits are lazy and sluggish, and we are very prone to fall asleep, unless we watch over them and often rouse them up, saying, with that holy woman, *Judg. 5. 12. awak, awak*; 2. Our lusts are alwayes in arms, and the devil watcheth for an opportunity against us, and is it time for us to sleep while the enemy is standing at the gate, and some of his forces already within doors? We cannot step one foot but Sathan hath his train laid to blow us up; the world is Sathans bird-lime to intangle us, or rather gun-powder which our lusts are ready to set on fire; and should not we be on our guard continually? And albeit the enemies main design be to spoil the treasure and take away the jewel, yet he hath a greedy eye at all that is ours: therefore we had need to watch over our eyes, our hands, our tongue, our thoughts, our passions, &c. if any one of these be let slip within his reach, he will not fail to improve the advantage; and every sin as it may provoke the Lord to turn away his ear, So it will indispose and turn our hearts from the duty: it is of a stupifying nature, it is, as (e) one speaketh, *the devils opium, wherewith if he be suffered to anoint thy temples, thou art in danger to fall*

(d) *Constant and frequent exercise, the first branch of preparation. By doing we are fitted to do, and to do better, or with greater facility.*

2. *Watchful.*

(e) *Mr. Gurn. spir. arm. part. 3. pag. 605. where ye will find this argument handled at greater length.*

Some antecedent and previous conditions of prayer.

asleep. 3. we should watch and observe the many mercies we receive, and our daily sins and failings, our weakness and manifold wants, all which may be fit materials for our prayers; which being pondered and kept on record, will prove a good help for the duty. 4. We should watch that we may hear when we are called to come to the throne, that we may observe every season and opportunity of prayer, that we may hearken to the voice of Gods dispensations towards us, and may welcom every messenger he sends out to invite us to come before him: that whensoever he saith to us (as he did to him, *Psa. 27. 8.*) *seek ye my face*, our hearts (like his) may be ready to reply, *thy face Lord we will seek*. If thus we could discern, and did carefully improve the several advantages offered unto us, what maner of Christians, how powerfull and mighty in prayer would we be? If we were such watchmen and students in holiness as becometh the Lords supplicants, and those who by profession are *agents* and *pleaders* at the bar of heaven and before the (f) great King, with what diligence would we (g) study our hearts, and study our lives, and the several steps of providence; our condition, exigence, &c. that we might know when to come, and what to say while we appear before the Lord. O! if we did thus prepare and watch unto prayer, with what reverence and confidence, with what importunity, fervency and zeal might we (b) pour out our heart before him? we should not want mater nor words; we might pray pertiaently and seriously, and far more successfully, then for the most part we do.

(f) *Psa. 47. 2.*

(g) *Pleaders*

at the throne

of grace would

be great stu-

dents, that they

may be able to

improve the

several topics

of divinity for

carrying their

glory and cause.

(h) *Psa. 6. 8.*

Third branch

of preparation

is meditation.

(i) *Verbaque*

pravisam rem

non invita se-

quuntur Hor.

agere volen-

tem (sper me-

ditari deces,

nam segniores

omnes incipis

verbis.

Meditatio si

vis gerenda

desunt Auson.

de lud. 7. (a-

piens.

3. Meditation is a good preparation for prayer; it is a token for good when we can say, with *David*, *Psa. 5. 1.* *Lord hear and consider my meditation.* When the (i) hears; by meditation, inditeth a good mater, the tongue will be as the

The Hebrews do use one and the same word for signifying to meditate and to pray, viz. *W* Thus the word *Gen. 24. 63.* where Isaac is said to have went out *W* is rendered either to pray or to meditate; and it were to be wished, that these two in our practice were not separated, that as that word may be applied to, so what is signified by, it may be found in all our prayers.

pen of a ready writer, *Psa. 45. 1.* Meditation will facilitate the work, and direct and excite the worker, it will give eyes to the blind, hands to the weak, and bring in provision for the empty. If we were to speak to some great person, (k) *Isa. 38. 14.* especially if to a King, how would we pre-meditate and ponder what we should say, and how we should carry our selves in his presence? and yet we will be at no pains to meet the great King; it is true, he will accept of the sighs and sobs of mourners, though we do but (k) lament as a dove, and character as a swallow and crane, he will pity and shew mercy: but, alas! we basely abuse this astonishing condescension. Ah! should we be negligent and irreverent, because he is tender and indulgent? Many complain for want of enlargement, and because of deadness and coldness in prayer, that wandering and impertinent thoughts break in, &c. but will not be at the pains to prevent these evils by watchfulness and meditation. If thou wouldst set some time apart seriously to ponder and meditate, what a great and dreadfull Majesty, and yet how loving and mercifull, thou hast to deal with, that would beget both reverence and confidence; if thou wouldst consider his omni-presence and omni-science, this would stir thee up to watchfulness, it would fix thy heart and prevent wandering thoughts; if thou didst remember his power and omnipotence, his fidelity and truth, this would strengthen thy faith and expectation of success; if thou wouldst consider who thou art, what is thy distance as a poor creature, and yet more in that thou art so great a sinner, and be the just and holy Lord, this would beget humility and godly fear; if thou wouldst lay to heart thy several wants, and what thou stands in need of for (l) life and godliness; what are thy straits and dangers, and what kindness the Lord hath hitherto shewed, (l) 1 Pet. 1. and what long-suffering and patience he hath exercised towards thee, and what are the mercies which from time to time thou receivest, this would fill thy heart with matter both of prayer and praise. I do not say, that all are alike unfit and unprepared, or that upon every occasion we should spend so much or so much time upon this preparatory work. When the heart is in such a spiritual frame and disposition as his was.

was, *Psalm 42: 1, 2* when it thirsteth and panteth after the living Lord, it were a pity to stay such a longing soul for one moment from the fountain. And, 2. we will not alwayes have opportunity (especially when we are occasionally called to joyn with others) thus to prepare for the work; but then we may dart up some short ejaculation to God for his help and assistance, which we may confidently expect when the work of preparation was not slighted, by reason of our sloth and negligence; and though thou didst set apart a considerable time for meditation, especially when thou meetest with some extraordinary occasion, and when thou joynest fasting to prayer, (for even those who, for ordinary, neglect this work, will then be at some pains to prepare their hearts for that more solemn exercise) but whatever be the occasion and whensoever thou goest about that duty, such short and ejaculatory petitions might well be intermixed all alongst the work; thus we may bring help from heaven and engage God in our quarrel, it is not good to wrestle alone with a hard heart. I have read of *Luther*, that whenever he found any dis temper and indisposition creep on, he would instantly go to the throne and complain of it to God; and certainly prayer is one of the best preparations for prayer, this was *David's* practise, *Psalm 141: 1, 2, 3, 4* he would review his heart and his wayes, and his prayers, and make one prayer the object of another, (he would pray for success both to the prayer he had made and was to make, and thus make prayer a transition from prayer to prayer) They who know what a hard task it is to recall their thoughts from worldly and distracting cares, and to silence our lusts after they are once in arms, they will see a necessity of divine assistance, and to dispatch a messenger to the throne of Grace for that effect. Though it be necessary to meditate upon, and consider our wayes, and to take a view of such motives as may imbitter our case unto us; yet unless an omnipotent arme go alongst with, and apply these considerations, they will not prevail with our deaf and stubborn hearts, nor draw them off these lovers and turn them to God: and therefore, since in our private converse with him we are allowed the liberty to intermix those duties,

2101 and so join prayer, with meditation: we would not in our discourse separate those two, which are thus so mutually helpful one to the other, and both so subservient and instrumental in disposing and preparing the heart for a more solemn address to God: a little eating before meal prepareth a weak stomach, and lesseneth an edge upon the appetite, but long fasting takes away the the stomach, and blunts the desire after meat; prayer is the best harbinger for prayer; and a little gust of the heavenly *manna* will dispose for a set meal; but the longer we discontinue our acquaintance with God, our love waxeth the colder, and the heart the more dead and indisposed for a communion with him; and he is thus provoked to hide his face when we draw nigh to him.

Thus ye see what should be done, and will ye thus prepare to seek the Lord? but if ye will not, if deadness and indisposition come on, if the Lord with-draw and (m) turn away thy prayer, thou mayest know whom to blame; *Hezekiah* would only pray for those who made conscience of his preparatory work, and for them he was heard, 2 Chr. 30. 19, 20. and such may most confidently pray for themselves, and expect that the Lord will (n) attend to the voice of their supplications. When we are unwillingly drawn to the throne, and are uncheerfull in Gods presence, no wonder though he hide his countenance and send us away empty; but when the heart (o) panteth after him, and thirsteth to appear before him, when his fruit is (p) sweet to our taste, and we sit down under his shadow with delight, he will welcom us, upon whom already he thus beginneth to smile, and whom he hath brought in to the (q) banquetting-house, he will satiate with his goodness such longing souls.

5. Before we draw the bow, we would have our eyes fixed upon the right mark. if the arrow be not right directed, neither its swiftness, nor the goodness of the bow, nor the strength of the arm can profit; high raised affections not right levelled, are like to a ship carried with full sails, but wanting the rudder. The end is the main and principal (r)

hoc est receptum dogma & quasi primum principium in philosophia Criticologia, &c. Suar. metaph. dis. 23. sect. 1.

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- (i) *Propter rationes quas ibid. proponit Suar. (præcipue secundum) quibus solvatur non suis par, & ideo scilicet. 4. § 17. facitur causalitatem finis quodammodo, dimissis omnimodo, esse modum & quasi artificiosam, & intellectualem.*
- (i) *Finis, est sit postremus in executione est tamen primus in intentione agens, & hoc modo habet rationem causam, Thom. 1. 2. quæst. 1. art. 1. ad im.*
- (u) *Finis præcipua est inter circumstantias actus humani, cum alia se tantum habent per modum accidentis, finis vero sit causa actus. Pet. 8. Joseph id. ibi. moral. lib. 2. de pecc. cap. 1. re. 4.*
- (x) *Noveris itaque non officium sed finibus a vitiis discernendas esse virtutes: officium est autem quod faciendum est, finis vero propter quod faciendum est: cum itaque facit homo aliquid ubi peccare non videtur, si non propter hoc facit propter quod facere debet, peccare con vincitur, August. lib. 4. contra Julianum, cap. 3.*
- circumstance of moral actions, say, it is reckoned by Philosophers (most (1) commonly, though most (i) grossly) amongst the four physical causes; yes, in some respect in (u) accounted the first of them, but though it should have no place there (its influence not being physical and proper, but only intencional and objective) yet on all hands its granted, that it is the first *base* and foundation of morality; and the Lord taketh special notice of it, and mainly looks after the end we propose in all our actions and endeavours, when that is wrong, all is wrong: all *Jehu* his zeal against *Baals* priests, and his fidelity in executing the divine sentence against the house of *Abah*, for want of a right end, lost both *name* and *thing*. It was not *obedience* but *murder*, therefore (saith the Lord) *I will avenge the blood of Jezeel upon the house of Jehu*, notwithstanding any warrant from me he could pretend to, *Hos. 1. 4.* Though *Jehu* did what was commanded, yet being animated by self-interest, and looking rather after *Abah's* crown, and that he might secure himself in the throne, then after the command and glory of God; the Lord did not value what he did, but on the contrary, most justly threatened to deal with him as a murderer, for shedding the blood of Princes to satisfy his lust and ambition: Base, low, carnal, selfish ends, do (x) spoil and debase the most specious performances, and make all our religious exercises, and most spiritual acts of worship, become a sacrifice to the creature, and to be meer idolatry and self-worship. *When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even these seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even unto me? Zech. 7:5.* They did fast, and that very often, and for a long time, for the space of their seventy years captivity: O! but (saith the Lord) I do not value your fasting, weeping and praying, for though ye professed to humble your self *before me*, yet all this was done *for your selves*; ye did not at all fast unto me, that I might thereby be honoured; ye did not aim at the

glory of my name, which ye had so much profaned and dishonoured, but your captivity and low condition made you cry for deliverance; *self* was your utmost end, and therefore ye did not at all fast *unto me*. Thus also they are said, *Hos. 7. 14.* to assemble themselves, to howl, weep, and make many supplications to God, and yet he denied that then they cryed to him, because they did not seek him with the whole heart, nor honestly aim at his glory; they sought him only for the fashion, and upon design, for corn and wine, that they might eat and make merry; they were content thus to complement with God, that they might hire him to gratifie and serve their lusts. Ah! who would not abominate that vile woman, who with an impudent face durst pretend her vows and peace-offerings for a cloak, nay rather as a price, whereby she purchased a licence to commit whoredom, *Prov. 7. 14. &c.* And yet, behold how small the difference is between this strumpet and carnal professors; she would hire God with her sacrifices to connive at her lust, and to prosper her in her wantonness; but they will seek after God, that he may (x) gratifie a more cleanly lust; their honour, their profit, their ease, &c. And thus both the one and the other would have God (according to that sad complaint, *Isa. 43. 24.*) to serve with their sins.

(x) *It is much that ye should be servants of sin, but that ye should make God fellow-servant, and yoke him in the same servility, is not so be endured,* *Matt. 23.*

1. Jam. 4. 3.

(y) *Lucernam fur accendit ex ana foveis, &c.*

But, 2. though the end thou aimest at be not thus of it self *sinfull* and unlawfull, yet it may be *natural* and selfish; though thou do not, with the thief in the fable, kindle thy torch to let thee see to steal at the (x) lamps of the altar, yet thou mayest from thence bring light to let thee see to walk.

Yea, 3. thy aim may be wrong, though it be not either *sinfull*, or merely *natural*; if it be *moral*, or (shall I say) *spiritual*, thou mayest pray to satisfie and quiet thy conscience, which otherwise would flee in thy face, and arrest thee as a very Atheist; yea, thou mayest thus look up to God, desiring to make some satisfaction to, and be at peace with him, and yet thy end may be merely *legall* and selfish, there may be no love to God in the heart, nor any desire to glorifie him; and will the Lord accept such a performance? If the

(b) *Hic obijci
posset quod
Suarcz. loc.
cit. lib. 1. cap.
14. (est. 5.
proponit, con-
tra suam &
communem
pontificiorum
sententiam,
quod scil.
orandum sit
pro defunctis
qui jam bea-
tifica visione
Dei fruuntur.
Sed missis ist.
in/modi nugis,
argumentum
nude propo-
nunt, quate-
nus, viz. mi-
litare videtur
contra finem
ultimum ora-
tionis. Est-
que ejusmodi
OBJ. Si
divina gloria
à nobis deside-*

*retur & in oratione postuletur, ut in primis verbis orationis dominica orare docemur, sequitur orationem fieri pro ipso Deo cum tamen fiat ad Deum. Quemadmodum interdum roga-
mus hominem ut sibi ipsi aliquid bonum faciat, sed hoc durum, &c. Resp. Aliud esse petere
gloriam Dei, aliud vero petere propter gloriam Dei; in priori, gloria Dei est objectum; in po-
steriori, finis petitionis. Et obijctio, licet videatur concludere contra utrumque, maxime tamen
contra primum (sed revera contra neutrum) de quo nobis nunc non est sermo. Ad obijctionem
tamen paucis. Resp. cum Suario, totam utilitatem vel commoditatem illius extrinsecam
gloria Dei quam manifestari petimus, esse propriam illorum hominum qui illum glorificant,
nostra enim bonitas & pietas ad Deum non pertingit, Pl. 16. 2. Job, 22. 2. Job, 35. 7.
Quamvis itaque petitio nostra tendat in Deum ut in finem, imo licet ut in objectum, non
tamen dici potest cum proprietate (ut loquitur Suar.) nos orare pro Deo, quia proprie dici-
mur orare pro aliquo solum, quando per orationem querimus illius commodum vel utili-
tatem.*

(b) glory of God must be the chief and ultimat end of our eating and drinking, nay, of all our actions, 1 Cor. 10. 31. Shall we aim at a lower end in the immediat acts of worship? And should not all things be to him, of whom, and through whom they are? Rom. 11. 35. There be many supplicants at the throne of Grace; but, alas! few level at so noble a mark, or look up to so high an end; and thus they ask and receive not, because they ask amiss, Jam. 4. 3.

Its true, thou mayest make the creature thy secondary, subordinat and immediat end, thou mayest moderately love and desire it, and therefore thou mayest ask it, and use the means for obtaining of it; bread may send an hungry man to the throne, and whatsoever be thy want and necessity, thou art allowed to ask a supply and remedy: the creature may occasion and give the rise unto thy prayer, but thou must not rest up on it; thou shouldst pray, that thou mayest obtain (for God both appointed it as a mean for that end) but yet thou mayest not seek it for its self, or for thy self, that thou mayest lay it out upon thy lusts; if we thus seek, we shall not receive and if any thing fall to us by a common providence, it becometh gall and worm-wood in the belly; what we make meat for our lusts, becometh sewel to feed the ever-devouring, but never-destroying flames of the indignation of the Almighty; such as love themselves inordinatly, such as serve

and idolize their lusts, are forced in the issue, to undergo what they most abhor; self-love proveth the grossest self-murder, *Mat. 16. 25.* Such as make *self* their last and great end, their state is wretched and miserable, and their woes shall never come to an end.

You will say, since prayer should be used as a mean for obtaining the desired mercy, how shall I know when I idolize that mercy, and make it my ultimate end in prayer? Quest.

Ans. Thou dost provoke the Lord, and abuse a most solemn and promising ordinance, when thou expectest no return of thy prayers, and askest not that thou mayest obtain; and therefore whatever other end thou mayest propose (as discharge of duty, the enjoying of fellowship with the Father and his Son, an heavenly frame of spirit, the shining of Gods countenance in that ordinance, and a tast of the heavenly *manna*) yet the proper, immediat and direct end of prayer, &c.

is to procure the particular mercy we desire and stand in need of; and therefore we must use it for that end, and have it often in our eye; 1. before we come, it must send us to the throne; 2. while we come, it must animate the desire; and, 3. after prayer, it will make us wait and look for a return.

But let us beware of the popish leaven, that no (c) opinion of merit do feed our expectation; who would not abominat that beggar, who would ask an almes upon the account of debt, as if his asking did give him a right? and what creditor would accept of entreaties and requests as good payment? all would go to that market where such money were current. Ah foolish Papists and unwise I how dare ye thus mock the holy one? And shall such proud boasting Pharisees (d) expect to (e) receive any thing from the Lord? such as would carry on a

(c) *Suar. lib. 1. cap. 11. sect. 13. Ex Alense proponit tres fines seu fructus orationis, viz. 1. ad degustandum seu ad dulcedinem & delectationem ex contemplatione & amoris Dei capiendum; 2. ad exsolven-*

dum seu ad merendum & satis faciendum divina justitia; 3. Ad impreandum quod petimus. De primo & tertio non est questio inter nos & Penitenciam; de secundo disputari solet in articulo de merito bonorum operum, quod nostri Theologi passim refellunt ut vanum & absurdum commentum, sed fere nihil (ut fas est Suarez,) cap. 22. sect. 1. hoc loco specialiter de oratione dicere necesse est, quamvis oratio sit praeceptum inter tria principalia capita ad quae opera satisfactoria a papistis reduci solent; Jejunium enim refertur ad orationem, & elemosyna est opus exterius, vid Thom. 22. quest 83. art. 13. (d) Jam. 1.7. (e) An opinion of dignity and merit would binder and obstruct the acceptance and success of prayers, he who hath money wherewith he may buy, needs not begg. When we resolve to stand to a legal plea, we need not make our supplication to the Judge, Job. 9.15.

(f) Isa. 64. 6. trade with heaven, must not bring such (f) *filthy rags*. Ah what are all our righteousnesses? all our prayers and performances? who will go about to establish their own righteousness, but such as are ignorant of the righteousness of God? Rom. 10. 3. If our works have such a meritorious worth in them, Christ died in vain: and what do we owe to the free mercy and grace of God? For to him that worketh, the reward is reckoned, not of grace, but of debt, Rom. 4. 4. It is Christs prerogative to ask upon the account of justice, and to plead the title of purchase, but to us all is free; his love, his blood, all the promises, all our enjoyments, and all the good we stand in need of, grace, glory, our bodily being and life, with all its comforts and accommodations. Though the Lord, by his free promise, hath made a connexion between our working and the reward, yet we must not imagine any kind of *causality*, by way of merit; though our works be *via regni*, yet not *causa regnandi*. They are *the way*, and a mean sanctified and appointed of God for obtaining the blessing, but not *the cause*, nor can they give any title by way of purchase and causality; but yet the connexion is no less sure and infallible, the Lords truth and veracity being as strong and firm a ground and support of faith, as his equity and justice; hence we may as confidently look for the return of our prayers, as if by these we did merit and purchase what we desired.

(g) *Subordinata non pugnant.*

(h) *Bonum opus initiatio facit, non enim valde attendas quid homo faciat, sed quid cum facit, aspiciat. prin. 4. quinquag ex prolo Pl. 31.*

August. *Quicquid autem boni fit ab homine, & non propter hoc fit propter quod fieri debere sapientia precipit, est officio videtur bonum, ipso non recto sine peccatum est, August. lib. contra*

terms desirest thou this mercy? and wouldst thou have it upon any terms, though it might prove a weapon to dishonour me] what wouldst thou reply? canst thou truly say, [nay Lord, my soul abominates it as such, and I would rather part with what mercies I enjoy, then receive an addition to them upon such terms] and thus, if thou art as ready to pray against, and deprecate these outward things under that reduplication, as thou wast serious in asking them as supposed blessings, thou needst not fear least thou hast asked amiss; if thy end had been wrong, thy desire had been more peremptory, neither would it have thus stooped to the will of God.

(o) Gen. 30. 1. Self and lust are impetuous, and (o) *Rachel*-like are impatient in desiring, and cannot bear a denial or delay, but if they be satisfied, its no matter though God lose of his glory, and the soul of its beauty and heavenly ornaments; but when Gods glory is intended, temporal things will be asked, 1. moderately, both as to the degree of the desire, and to the measure of the thing desired; 2. with submission to the will of God; and, 3. in subordination to his glory; And thus all regular prayers for temporals, have two parts; as we pray for such a mercy upon supposition of expediency and subserviency to the great end, so either virtually or expressly, we deprecate it upon the supposition of inexpediency and hurt, as shall appear, *Part, 4. chap. 1.* And herein honest supplicants do imitate their Master, and when they pray for any outward mercy or deliverance, either actually or in the habitual intention, they include a proviso, and either imply in their desire, or expressly ad this post-script to all such supplications, (p)

(p) Mat. 26.

39. 42.

(q) What the

Poet said of *done,*

the land of our

nativity, viz.

[that it will

not suffer us

to forget it]

may more tru-

ly be said of

our chief good

and ultimas

end.

Nevertheless, not as I Will, but as thou wilt, thy will be

2. What we much love and mainly intend, will be much in our eye, and will often run in the thoughts; we will not need a monitor to put us in minde of it, but (q) *Sua dulcedine semper — Ducet & immemores non finet esse sui*; the mind must frequently meditate upon that which the heart much loveth, and though it be shut out, yet it will intrude and insinuate it self, and creep in again upon the thoughts; nay, absence, distance, hazard and difficulty will but rather inflame the

the desire, quicken and double our diligence, and arrest and more seriously take up our thoughts, then divert them from looking upon that which we much love and effectually intend. If then the glory of God be the great errand and business and mark thou aimest at, thou must frequently meditate upon it, unless the archer have the mark in his eye he must shoot at random.

You will say, but we cannot alwayes actually minde the glory of God; When must we then, and how often minde it? *Quest. Anf.*

The more we think upon it, it is an evidence that we intend it the more; yet, we must not determine how often, and for how long a time the thoughts must be thus employed. As in other works and parts of holiness, so here, there is a great variety and latitude: A popish Casuist (r) affirmeth, that once, at least, every day we should renew our resolution, to refer all our wayes to the glory of God; and well might he say, that this should be the *minimum*, the least that ought to be done, albeit, alas I too many titular Christians never once yet to this day did make, or sincerely came to this resolution: but I should think, that, at least, as often as we pray we should renew this resolution, and whensoever we ask temporals, we should cordially say, [not our will, but thine, O Lord, be done] (s) *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory*; do what seemeth good in thy eyes, and what serveth most to illustrate the glory of thy name; but (t) grant not our foolish desires, and further not our hurtfull devices, &c.

3. He who asketh for the glory of God, when he hath obtained what he desired, will be carefull to improve and lay it out for that end. Thus *Hannah* askt a son from the Lord, and *lent him to the Lord as long as he lived*, 1 Sam. 1. 27, 28. It is true, she did not thus consecrate her other three sons to the publick ministry in the temple, and it may be the Lord will not call thee to part with all; but yet thou shouldest be in readines if it were to offer up thy *Isaac*, and to abandon thy darling and most beloved comforts; and though thou art allowed still to possess, yet, mayest thou not improve thy possessions better for his glory, and spare so much

Quest. Anf.
(r) Pet a S. Joseph in Eubie. ad quasi. An desur aliquis actus humanus indifferens in individuo, seu, ut loquuntur, in actu exercicio.
(s) Proponitur hic exemplum animi veri pii nihil aliud spectantis quam gloriam Dei dum in tribulationibus et periculis auxilium divinum implorat, Muscul. in Psal. 115. 1.
(t) Psal. 140. 3.

Some antecedent and previous conditions of prayer.

of them as he calls for, which haply will be but a little? But, Ah! so much health and strength, so much wealth and honour, and nothing of that laid out for God, and none of it employed in, and for his service: None under thy charge, encouraged by thy example and warning, no hungry Saints fed, no good work promoted by thy substance, but thou accountest all lost that is laid out that way, and thou wouldst rather suffer the publick Ministry and schools of Learning to decay, then thou wouldst contribute for their maintenance, did not the Law of the land compell thee to give a little for that end; with which (though it be not thine, and thou never hadst any right unto it, yet) thou as unwillingly partest as the Mariner with his goods in a storm. Ah! hadst thou asked for God, thou would now imploy it better, and minde his interest and service more.

4. If thou ask for God, thou wilt not only take heed what, but how thou askest; as thou wilt be carefull to improve the mercy when enjoyed to the honour of God; So thou wilt be carefull to honour him by thy asking; thou wilt make conscience of thy duty and take heed how thou performest it, thou wilt look in to thy prayer as well as after its return; as thou art sensible of thy wants, so of thy debt, and that prayer is no small part of that homage we owe to God. Carnal prayers run to prayer as to a charm, they use it as a *mean*, and though never so superficially performed, are ready, with that people, *Isa.* 58. 3. to complain if God do not presently answer and give what they desired. O! but the Saints are more anxious about their *duty* then it's success, as to the having or wanting these outward things; and though they can use prayer as a sanctified mean, and confidently expect a return, yet they dare not plead their own righteousness nor the worth of their prayers; and if God may be glorified in with-holding what they desired, they rest satisfied and acquiesce in his will; if they honour God in their prayer, and if his name get honour by denying what they petitioned, this double advantage will not only sufficiently compensate that loss, but also rejoyce the heart of the supplicant (when seen and considered by him) and fill his mouth with songs of praise and thanksgiving.

Ah

Ah ! (o) what matter of humiliation, that we have so often prostituted so solemn an ordinance to our lusts and sensual appetite, and that so often we have been led by base and low ends ; the custom of the place and family, our wants and necessities, yea, and, many a time, our lusts and carnal desires have sent us to the throne, and we without blushing, have thus taken the holy and dreadful name of God in vain (because upon such a base account) and at the best, conscience of duty, and challenges from within, have set a work not a few, and the Saints too often. If conscience be satisfied, though the honour of God was little minded in the duty, we rest content, and if we enjoy our hearts desire, we do not look up to him from whom it came, nor are we carefull to improve it for his honour ; and as we little mind Gods glory in asking, so we expect small successe, and accordingly reap little fruit of our labours. O ! when will we be humbled for doing Gods work, and our own work, so negligently and deceitfully ; if we were more serious and fervent in our desires, and did more cordially aim at the glory of God, he would more effectually procure our good, and our prayers would be more preevalent and successfull : but no wonder (as one said) *though those prayers that want a good aim, do also want a good issue.* But, ah ! what motives can prevail with him who doth not sincerely (x) love God, to seriously mind and regard his honour and service ? The water in the pipe can ascend no higher then the head-spring from whence it came ; when self-love is the *spring*, self-interest must be the *aim* ; but if God were at the *beginning* of prayer, he would be the *end* ; if *love* to him, were the fountain and *principle*, his *glory* would be the *mark* and *scope*. And O ! if we were less carnal and selfish ! if we did seek more *for God*, we would receive more *from him* ; if his kingdom, glory and interest, had the precedency, our business would be more quickly dispatched, and we might trade for the creature more successfully, *Mat. 6. 33.* and what ever were our portion and allowance of it, were it small or great, it would prove sufficient and enough, yea, all, *Phil. 4. 18.* Temporals thus asks and received, lose, as it were, their nature and

(o) *Applicat.*

(x) *Ad eum ergo qui ubique presens est, non pedibus ire licet, sed moribus. Ad res autem nostras non ex eo quod quisque moris, sed ex eo quod quisque diligit, dijudicari solent ; non faciunt bonos vel malos mores, nisi boni vel mali mores.* August. Macedonio *epist. 52.*

(7) *Si tempore
valia bona con-
sideremus pro-
ut sunt utilia
ad opera vir-
tutum quibus
perducimur
ad vitam eter-
nam, in san-
ctum suum sim-
pliciter bona.*
Thom. 1, 2.
quæst 114.
art. 10. in
corp.

name, they are no more in the category of *indifferent things*; nay (saith (7) the great School-man) thus they become *simpliciter bona, absolutely good*, and blessings indeed, they are now of one kindred with spiritual mercies, they are thus (whatever difference be, as to their mater) arrows of the same quiver, bought at the same market, and with the same price, shot out of the same bow, and level'd at the same mark: all of them flow from the same fountain of free love, and are the purchase of blood, and being askt and received in faith, are improven to the honour of the giver. And thus we may upon good grounds subscribe, and put to our seal to that Christian paradox, that *a little which a righteous man hath* (not only his state and condition, but his creature-stock and outward possessions) *is better* (because better come, better employed, and laid out for a better use) *then the great treasures and revenues of the wicked*, Ps. 37. 16. Prov. 15. 16. Prov. 16. 8.

CHAP. II.

Some concomitant qualifications of prayer. What should be our carriage while we are at the throne? and what are these graces which should especially then be exercised?

- (a) Isa. 1. 18.
Jer. 30. 13.
(b) Rom. 15.
30. Gen. 32.
24. Hol. 12.
4.

PRayer being a (a) *pleading* with the wise God, and a (b) *wrestling* with the Almighty, we had need of much wisdom from above, and of the tongue of the learned, that we may order our cause aright before him; we have need of circumspection, and to take heed to our steps; we would then put on the whole armour of God, and stand in need of much strength, for making use of every part of it; as alwayes, so then especially the help of the Spirit is necessary, for quickning and enabling us to exercise all our graces; we had need then to awaken and rouse up, to invite and summon the soul, and all that is within us to joyn and contribute its assistance; the understanding and affections, as the main agents, must then be set a work, the zeal and strength of these, and of whatsoever other faculties can be subservient unto the work, must be

be let out; the greatest seriousness and activity is here too little; and all our graces should be awakened, and all of them may, some one way or other, be here employed and exercised; our faith, our hope, our love, humility, &c. It were too large a field to speak particularly to all these, but we shall only name a few, and insist a little on faith, as being very necessary to the right performance of this duty, though little known, or minded by too many.

Sect. I.

Of the, 1. attention, 2. reverence, 3. humility, 4. sincerity, 5. importunity, 6. watchfulness, and, 7. perseverance required in prayer.

Pf. 103. 1. (a) *Bless the Lord, O my soul, with all that is within me.*

Pf. 145. 18, 19. *The Lord is nigh to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him,*

Eph. 6. 18. *Praying always in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance, &c.*

1. **W**E should not need to spend time in showing, that we must take heed what we utter before the Lord, were it not that the false Church doth maintain and plead the cause of all formal and pharisaical professors [It is not necessary (saith their great Doctor *Aquinas*) that we attend to every petition we offer up to God, if we come to prayer with an (b) intention to seek God; for by virtue of this intention (which others call a *virtual intension*) albeit the mind in prayer doth wander, yet the prayer will not only, 1. prevail, but also, 2. be meritorious, and deserve an answer; (c) yet (saith he) 3. prayer without attention will not stir

(a) Blessing and praise is commonly reputed a part of prayer; however, it is conjoined with it, and is of the same nature, and requires the exercise of the same faculties and graces.

1. *Attention;*
(b) *Intensio est actus voluntatis de qua dictum fuit. prestat. attentio vero*

est actus intellectus de qua jam dicendum. (c) *Tertius autem effectus orationis est quem prefentialiter efficit, scil. quadam spiritualis reffectio mentis, & ad hoc de necessitate in oratione requiritur attentio.* Thom. 2. 2. quasi, 83. ars. 1. 3. in corp.

up and quicken the heart to a spiritual frame, nor inflame it with zeal towards God.] But Suarez, either pitying his masters weakness, or envying his liberality in yielding too much to the hereticks, denyeth attention to be necessary to this spiritual refection (as they speak) for (saith he) the rude and ignorant people praying in an unknown tongue, may thereby stir up their zeal and devotion: But for confuting of this abominable doctrine of Romanists, it would be remembered that there is a (d) twofold attention, virtual and actual; 1. *virtual*, which consisteth in the purpose and intention of the heart to be attent & serious in the work, which purpose and intention, though it be not actual and in being, yet is conceived to continue and abide, until, 1. either there arise a contrary purpose in the heart to divert the mind to some other subject; or else, 2. by our gross and supine negligence, we suffer the mind so to be diverted and distracted with other thoughts, that that distraction (though it be not formally and directly voluntary, yet indirectly, and by just interpretation) may be accounted voluntary. Now albeit this *virtual attention*, being neither of these two wayes interrupted, may be usefull for clearing the case concerning distractions and wandering thoughts in prayer, *viz.* whether they do nullifie and obstruct the whole performance, or not (of which, *Part. 3.*) yet it is impertinent for clearing the present question, concerning the act of the understanding that should be exercised in every petition we offer up to God; for whatever be the success of prayer, as to those petitions in which the mind was employed, and albeit they prove not successles, because in

(d) Suar.
lib. 1. cap.
3. sect. 5. 6.
cum tamen,
sect. 2. dixe-
rat ad spiritu-
alem refectio-
nem necessari-
am esse actua-
lem attentio-
nem, esse per
se iam notum
ut nulla indi-
geat robatio-
ne: & cap. 4.
sect. 3. fatetur
Bonaventura-
rum recte dix-
isse, valde in-
docens esse ut
quis cum Deo
loquatur ore &
alind medite-
tur corde, sa-

lemque orationem nunquam a Deo exaudiri. (e) Bonavent. opus. de proces. Religion. lib. 7. cap. 3. triplicem facit attentionem, viz. superficialem (viz. ad verba) literalem, (viz. ad sensum verborum) & spirituales (seu ad sensum mysticum si verba admittant) sed rectius Thom. loc. cit. tertium hoc membrum attentionis reservi, 1. ad Deum qui, 2. ad rem pro qua oratur. Sed noster Ames. cas. cons. lib. 4. cap. 14. addit quartam quo ad nosmet ipsos & dispositiones effectuum nostrarum attendimus; verum hoc genus attentionis potius spectat ad conditiones pravias; cum hac attentione potius invigilemus intentioni & dispositioni cordis (de quibus diximus) quam ipsi orationi: & primum ac secundum includuntur in tertio, adeoque hoc tertium quo, scilicet ad Deum & ad rem attendimus, est praprium & (ut loquitur Thomas) maxime necessarium.

that same continued action, with them was mixed some wandering and impertinent thoughts, yet those other petitions then put up without attention, may be rejected as unprofitable, yea, and as sinful, though of the free mercy of God in Christ pardoned. And he who hath but half an eye, may as palpably discern the popish tergiversation in this, as in any other article; while they labour to divert the dispute, having the boldness to (f) affirm, that all the arguments brought by orthodox Divines to demonstrate the necessity of actual attention, do only speak of, and conclude the necessity of this their virtual attention; but I think (g) Suarez hath gone more handsomely to work, in dissimulating the strength of our reasons, in not once mentioning them for the point which they prove so convincingly, that the reader might apprehend that he saw no ground why hereticks should alledge what he thought not worthy of an answer; while indeed (as I think) he knew not what answer to return; yet those must be named (they must not altogether escape so great a disputer) but no ways against him, but to prove his conclusion concerning the necessity of that (h) virtual attention; which is (as we observed) not only impertinent for clearing the present question, but also deserveth not the name of *attention*, as being not an act of the *mind*, but of the *Will*, and so more fitly (as also it is sometimes by (i) *Aquinas*) called the (k) purpose and *intention*. How would those Rabbies declaim against hereticks, if they had fallen into such a gross mistake and confusion? its true, the object of that *intention*, is attention, for thereby we purpose to attend; but who is so childish as to confound the act and the object? for so we might take *quidlibet pro quolibet*. And yet attention cannot alwayes be the object of their intention, especially when they go to pray in an unknown language; for how can they resolve to attend to what they know not, unless it be to the sound and pronounciation of the letters? And thus Parrots may as well be said to pray to God as Papists.

Hence our first argument; they who teach & plead for a brutish way of worship, must be the followers and admirers of (l) the beast, who have his mark upon their fore-head: But beasts having

(f) *Cam*
Thom. ar.
cis.
(g) *Suar* 100.
cis. cap. 4.

(h) *Hanc vir-*
tualem atten-
tionem habens (so-
lum deservire
affirmat quan-
do homo (circa
et videns se
de aliis cogi-
tare, et non
attendere, non
curat, sed
negligit, vel
directe vult il-
lo modo dicere.
Suar lib. 4o.
cap. 26. § 13.

(i) *Ar. cis.*
in corp.
(k) *Velle at-*
tendere non
est parrado-
xis re, Cajet in
Sum. 2. 2.
quæst 83.
ar. 12.

(l) *Rev. 13.*
4. and 16. 2.

having learned to utter words, may pray to God in the popish way, without reverence and attention. *Ergo*,

But, it is not strange to see them who make so many gods of idols and images, (in giving them divine worship and honour) to make an idol of the true God, and to serve him as if he neither knew, nor (*m*) could do good or evil. Hence, 2. Who dare thus mock a King or Ruler? Will any speak to such and not take heed what he saith? If thou didst (*n*) offer such irreverence to thy Governour, would he be pleased with thee?

(m) Jer. 10. 5.

(n) Mal. 1. 8.

(o) *Ratio red-*

ditur ex parte

natura ipsius

Dei; quia scilicet

natura ejus est

non corporum

aliquid, sed

spiritus; prop-

terea oportet

adorantes eum

adorare in

spiritu & ve-

ritate, ut ad-

oratio confor-

mis sit adora-

to. — Sub

spiritu volun-

tas sub verita-

te intellectu

comprehendi-

sur; — In spi-

ritu, non cul-

ta temporale,

non lingua, sed

subtiliore cultu

consistente in

spiritu, hoc est

in anima, &c.

Cajet. in Joa. 4. 23, 24. Imo ipse, Suar. loc. cit. cap. 4. § 4. fatetur ad-

orationem Dei requirere attentionem mentis, aliis fieri solo corpore, & non in spiritu; quia

libet adoratio in spiritu non excludat actionem corporis, requirit tamen principaliter spiritus

influxum ut sit vera adoratio.

(p) Non remisse, nec mente huc vel illuc evagante, eo quod talis non solum non impetrabit

quod petis, sed magis Deum irrisabis; Basilii apud Thom. dict. art.

(q) Αὐθάλας τὸ ὡς πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, ἀσκήσις τοῦ νοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος.

(r) Suarez loc. cit. § 5.

3. If God be a Spirit, he must be worshipped in spirit and truth, *Joh. 4. 24.* What doth the holy Lord value the gesture of the body and the moving of the tongue, if the heart be not employed in the work? [there must be (as (*o*) *Cajetan* confesseth) a conformity between our worship and him whom we worship.] We must seek to the father of Spirits with our spirit and whole soul; the mind must attend and direct, and the will must intend and follow the pursuit, otherwise the name of God is taken in vain, and the holy one is not worshipped, but dishonoured by our babling; we may thus *fear* to meet with a return in wrath, and that the Lord will deal with us according to our folly, but have no (*p*) ground to *expect* an answer in mercy, and that God will accept such vain oblations.

4. We may argue from the nature of this exercise. What is prayer but a *lifting up of the soul to God*, *Psa. 25. 1.* and, *86. 4.* Or, as commonly from (*q*) *Damasce*n it is defined, an elevation of the mind to him. And this (as (*r*) *Suarez*

confesseth) is essential to prayer; So that there can be no prayer unless the soul and mind be thus elevated to God: but it were ridiculous to imagine, that the mind is lifted up to God when it doth not attend, but wander and run away from him, and divert to other objects. *Ergo,*

5. How did the Apostle abominate this strange doctrine, while he would not permit that any man should utter words in prayer, before others, which they did not understand, albeit the speaker did well know their meaning? But, saith he, *I will pray with the spirit, and will pray with the understanding also;* and in the Church and before others, he would rather speak five words to their understanding, than ten thousand in an unknown tongue, *1 Cor. 14. 14, 15. 19.* Hence, some of the Papists themselves, yea, some of their great (f) Doctors, have been forced to acknowledge, that it were better and more profitable for the people, that their prayers and publick service were performed in their vulgar language, that all might understand and joyn in the work, then in latine, which few or none, except the Priest (yea haply not he) doth understand; thus *Lyra* and *Cajetan.* And as for private prayers, (t) *Suarez* granteth, that it were more fit and convenient, that the multitude and rude people should pray to God in their own language then in latine, whereof they are ignorant.

You will say, what then can be the reason why still they retain that ridiculous practice, and at other times plead so earnestly for it? *Ans.* The Pope and his Cardinals being earnestly sollicit and pressed with fear, had almost yielded at the Council of *Trent* to reform this and several other abuses, (from which, little gain might be reaped, and whereby the Popes treasure was not much increased) till at length they considered that this was an ill preparative, and might prove dangerous, if thus once they suffered the foundation,

(f) *Ex hac Pauli doctrina habetur quod melius ad edificationem Ecclesia est orationes publicas quam audientibus populo dicantur, dici lingua communis clericis & populo; quam ab eis latine, Cajetan. in 1 Cor. 14. ad 17. Quod si populus intelligat orationem & benedictionem sacerdotis, melius reducat in Deum, & devotius responder,*

amen, *Lyra* in 1 Cor. 4. 15: (t) *De privata autem oratione non improbabiter dici potest, melius esse personis illorum vocaliter orare in sua lingua vulgari, quam in latina vel alia sibi ignota; nam per se loquendo hoc videtur fructuosius ad finem orationis, Suarez, loc. cit., cap. 5. § 4.*

(u) *Nihil omnis in istis ritibus quous uno mutata, subruunt consuetudo fundamenta prorsus omnia Ecclesia Romana; — et prudentis esse non tam principia quam fines verum animadvertere, &c.*
Sua. Pol. hist. conc. Trident. lib. 7. pag. (mibi) 775.
 (x) *Vid. Calvinum loco citando.*
 (y) *Vid. Paræum & Bezam in locum, qui docent hunc Textum optime interpretari à Petro, 1 epist. 2. 5. Ergo includit orationem.*

concerning the Popes infallibility, (u) to be shaken; for, thus the people might be brought to believe, that they who had erred in these few things, might also be mistaken in other things of greater concernment. And thus we may see what a wofull snare the infallibility of the Roman Church hath proven, and still will be, to deluded Papists while they adhere to it.

6. The Christian sacrifice must be, 1. (x) spiritual, 1 Pet. 2. 5. and will the tongue, without the attention and concurrence of the spirit and mind, be a fit Priest to offer such an oblation? 2. It must be reasonable, (y) Rom. 12. 1. and is it reasonable to do the work of the Lord negligently, and while we are employed in his worship not to attend what we say? this were to run upon the curse, *Mal. 1. 14.* Ah! shall we, having a male in the flock, offer to God a corrupt thing? hath he not deserved the best? Ah! what have we to give? and shall we think any thing too good, and our hypocritical performance, without heart and life, to be acceptable service? such deceivers are cursed, but God will not be mocked. Let us remember the sad threatening against that people, *Isa. 29. 13, 14.* for drawing near to God with their mouth, and honouring him with their lips, while their heart was removed and did not concur in the work: and let us hearken to the exhortation, *Eccel. 5. 1, 2.* Let us take heed to our steps and watch over our thoughts, while we approach before the Lord, that we may not offer up to him the sacrifice of fools; the tongue is the hearts messenger, let it not then run un-sent, and go to God without an errand. Let the lips (saith (x) *Augustine*) speak what is in the heart; though the tongue be employed in the work, yet it must not be the chief agent, *mens orat, lingua loquitur*; the tongue can speak in prayer, but it cannot pray; lip-labour is no devotion, but a ready way to atheism and contempt of God; if the heart were filled with suitable thoughts of his majesty,

(z) *Dissonantia labia quod habet cor, August. in Psal. 39. cum oratio spiritualis sit Dei cultus, quid mirum si alienum est ab ejus natura quam à labijs sanctum, non autem intimo animo proficiscit, Calv. in 1 Cor. 14. 14.*

excellency and goodness, it durst not thus slight his worship and service; and the longer we continue in thus dallying with his ordinances, we grow the more bold and impudent, till at length we cast off all fear and reverence. Its a sad thing that any should be so careless and negligent, as to suffer his mind to be diverted, while he is speaking to God, and that any should be so foolish and irreverent, as to entertain discourse with the servants, while he is looking up to the King, and presenting his supplication to him; but yet it is more intolerable, and scarce credible, that amongst those who profess the name of Christ, there should be found a generation so impudent, as to plead and maintain that it is not necessary, that we should know or attend to what we say in prayer. Must not Sathan (as (a) Calvin lamenteth) have much power over these men? O! but it is a dreadful judgment to be given over to the Spirit of delusion.

But (b) Suarez objecteth, that it is difficult, yea, morally impossible to be so attentive in prayer as not to give way to some distractions and wandering thoughts. And would God require of us a condition that could be so hardly performed? *Ans.* But it is more impossible to the holiest man on earth to keep the Law perfectly, and not to sin against God; and shall we therefore say that the Lord in his most holy Law doth not require perfect obedience of us, and shall our sins thus become no sins? The Lord once gave us power, which through our own fault we have lost, and disabled our selves; but shall the Creditor lose his right because the Debitor hath wasted the stock he intrusted him with? Our ability cannot now be the rule and measure of our duty, and what we owe to God. And Suarez might as well have brought this argument against the spiritual performance of any duty, as against attention in prayer; for failings and infirmities will alwayes accompany our best way of performance: what? must we not at all then endeavour, and shall we do nothing? and albeit in prayer wandering and impertinent thoughts will now and then intrude themselves, yet we may drive them away, as Abraham did the fowls which came down upon the carcasses: and watchfulness and

(a) *Hade discimus: qualiter & quam effraui licentia grassatus sit Sathan in Papatu—nonne Paulum pro idiota habent & Deum ex professo contemnimus? unde—* *mus ergo quam impune apud eos Sathan ludat, in eo autem diabolica eorum contumacia se prodit quod moniti tantum absunt a penitentia ut ferro & igni tam crassam corruptelam tuatur, Calvin in 1 Cor. 14. 16.*
(b) *Suar. loc. cit. cap. 5. sect. 7.*

(c) *Quomo-
do te a Deo
audiri postulas
cum te ipse
non audias?
Vixisse Deum
memorem tui
cum rogas,
cum tu ipse
memor tui non
sis, Cyprian.
de orat. do-
min.*
2. Fear and
reverence.

attention is a good preservative for preventing, and also a fit remedy for curing this evil: and the greater the danger be, we should the more diligently use the remedy; and though some fits may still recur, yet the disease may thus be kept from proving deadly; if thou stir up thy heart to attend, if thou set a guard and keep watch, though impertinent thoughts may notwithstanding creep in, yet they shall not be able to marre the acceptance and success of thy prayer (as shall appear at greater length, *Part 3.* where we shall speak to the case concerning wandring thoughts) O! but if we give way unto, and do not strive against them, and if they be suffered to grow up, and over-spread the whole duty, and thus to choke the good seed, what cropt can be expected? *How can we* (saith (c) *Cyprian*) *imagine that God will hearken, when we our selves will not hearken, and that he should hear and regard those prayers and requests which we our selves do not regard or attend unto?* It is unreasonable to desire, and foolish to expect any good from, or a gracious answer unto such irreverent, unadvised and unfavoury supplications.

But, 2, Albeit, thus we must attend and be serious in the work of the Lord, yet that is not enough; we cannot *serve God acceptably* in any point of his worship, far less in prayer, unless we do it with *reverence and godly fear*, Heb. 12. 28. This godly fear is so necessary, that it is frequently put for the whole worship of God, and a holy man is often described by it; and as it is thus so excellent in it self, and so necessary for us, so it prevaieth very much with God; For, *He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him; he will hear their cry, and will save them.* Ps. 145. 19. O! but every fear is not this reverential and godly fear; there may be much fear in the soul, and yet this may be wanting; the people of *Israel* were exceedingly afraid, when they heard Gods voice out of the midst of the fire, and cryed unto *Moses*, *ah! this great fire will consume us.* Deut. 5. 24, 25. yet there was little of this holy fear in them, as afterwards appeared in their frequent murmuring; and therefore saith the Lord, there, *ver. 19. O! that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me.* They did then fear

God,

God; but O! saith the Lord, if they would fear me aright: there is a *servile and selfish fear of God*, only because of his power, justice and terrors, and there is much of this fear in hell, where it is accompanied with much enmity and hatred of, and rebellion against him; and though on earth it may produce an out-side and half-reformation, yet no cordial and heart renovation; though some may thus forbear to commit sin, yet it makes them not hate sin; though it may disturb and drive away the thief from his prey, yet it will not make him leave off to cover it; this fear may perplex a man, and put him on the rack, but it cannot convert him, and turn the heart unto the Lord. But then there is a son-like and *filial fear* of reverence, due distance and respect; which though it exclude not Gods justice (for we may thus fear him, as being able to cast into hell, *Luk. 12. 5.*) yet is mainly conversant about, 1. his majesty and greatness; 2. his bounty and goodness: his excellency begets reverence, and makes us keep a due distance; and his loving kindness makes us stand in awe, and fear lest we grieve and offend him; though the Son did not fear the rod, yet would he stand in awe and be loth to offend his kind Father; and the greater the Fathers kindness, and the love of the Son be, the Fathers displeasure will be the more grievous unto the Son; *when the children of Israel shall return and cordially seek the Lord their God, they shall fear the Lord and his goodness.* Hof. 3. 5. Ah! were there any thing of this reverence and filial fear in the heart, it would be as a load-stone to draw us in to God, and it would be as honey and the honey-comb, to sweeten our communion with him, and make us go about our duty cheerfully; and what a notable guard and preservative would it prove against wandering thoughts? and what attention and seriousness would it beget and maintain? When we speak to a King, with what diligence will we watch over our thoughts, words, and whole carriage? the reverence we owe to him will make us circumspect. And is it not the want of that reverence we owe to the infinite majesty of the great God; that maketh us so careless and negligent of his worship? But Q! if we did more seriously mind our stance,

(d) Mal. 1.
14.

and did consider what base sinfull wretches we are, who are admitted to draw nigh to the (d) great King, if we did lay to heart his condescending love, his mercy and goodness, yet not forgetting his excellency and greatness, with what both *confidence* and *reverence* might we approach to him? This reverential and filial fear is not opposit unto, but is the ground and foundation of, solid confidence: there can be no *security* without this *fear*; the false peace of fearless sinners is but desperat madness, but where this fear is, there is no danger; and such a soul needs not perplex it self any more with terrors and a slavish fear, it may now come to God with confidence, yea and with boldness; if thou hearken to the exhortation, and wilt *serve God with reverence and godly fear*, Heb. 12. 28. thou mayest also lay hold on the priviledge and consolation, and *come boldly unto the throne of grace, that thou mayest obtain what mercy thou standst in need of*, Heb. 4. 16. Thus (e) Luther (as *Vitus Theodorus* testi-

(e) *Bene De-
us (inquis Vi-
tus Theodo-
rus in epist. ad
Melancht.)
quoniam spiri-
tus, quoniam fi-
des in ipsius
verbis inest:
santa reveren-
tia aliquid po-
nit ut cum Deo:
santa spe &
fide ut cum pa-
tre & amico
se loquuntur*,
Mel. Adamus
in vita Lu-
theri, pag.
(mibi) 1434

fith) used to pray to God, [with as great reverence as became a sinfull creature speaking to the holy Lord; and yet with such hope, confidence and boldness as if he had been speaking to a father and intimat friend.] But, ah! how should not only formal Professors, but the Saints also and children of God, be humbled for their careless and irreverent carriage in Gods worship and service; many a time might the Lord say, even to his precious ones, [is this the reverence ye owe to your Maker? is this the worship ye allow me? durst ye deal so with the ruler, though a poor creature like your self? would not such irreverence in his presence, be thought unseemly and intolerable, yea, and justly censurable? And yet, your heart is not smitten for the affront ye offer to me, but rather thinks, that by such service, an obligation is put upon me, and that ye have cause to complain if I refuse or delay to answer such formal and lazy prayers. O! repent of this your rashness and deadness in my Worship and Ordinances, and for your disrespect and contempt of me, lest I deal with you according to your folly.]

3. We must pray in *humility*: as we must have high and *reverential* thoughts of God, So we must have low and *humble* thoughts

thoughts of our selves; pride is detestable in all, but intolerable in beggars; thou comest to ask an alms from God, let the frame of thy heart and thy carriage be suitable unto thy trade and employment: if thou draw nigh in thy pride, thou mayest fear an answer in wrath. But, the heavens may be astonished, and the earth blush, at the popish arrogancy; God forbid (saith (f) *Tappernus*) that the Saints should expect heaven, as beggars do an alms; it is more glorious for them to receive it as a triumphant garland, due to them for their sweating and labouring; and (saith (g) *Bellarmino*) it is more honourable to enjoy by purchase and merit, then by a free donation. I am ashamed to relate such a blasphemous dream, as (h) one of their own number (to wit *Durand*) calls it, and if we might stay to debate the matter with these unreasonable men, his reason is very considerable: For, (saith he) [if God of his free grace inable us to pray or perform any other duty, we are so far from obliging God thereby, that thus we become the more adebted to him for this goodness; how absurd is it to think, that, by a free gift, the giver must be obliged to give more?] And, saith (i) another [if ye would not lose the favour of God, ye must not once mention your own merits.] Yea, *Suarez* and *Bellarmino*, the two great Champions of the Roman Church, after all their boasting, are forced in the issue to yeeld, (contrary to the whole scope of their dispute and arguments) that though this money be current, yet it is not safe to bring it to the market; but, (saith (k) *Bellarmino*) it is best and most sure to put all our con-

(f) *Abfit ut
justi vitam
aeternam ex-
pensis suis
pauper ele-
mosynam.*
(g) *multo namque
gloriosius est,
&c. Taper.
in art. Lou 10.*

(h) *Magis
enim bonari-
ficum est habere
aliquid ex
merito quam
ex sola dona-
tione, Bell. de
justis, impit
& bon. op. con-
serv. 2. prin-
cip. lib. 5. cap.
3.*

(i) *Illud quod
sumus, & quod
habemus, sive
sunt boni atti-
tus, sive boni
habitus, vel
usus, totum est
in nobis, &c. li.*

generalise divinis gratiis danti & conservante, & quia ex dono gratuito nullus obligatur ad dandum amplius, sed potius recipiens magis obligatur danti; ideo om bonis habitibus, & ex bonis actibus sive usibus nobis, a Deo danti Deus non obligatur nobis ex aliquo debito justitiae ad aliquid amplius dandum, ita quod si non dedisset sit injustus, sed potius non sumus Deo obligati: & sentire (eu dicere, oppositum est remunerarium seu blasphemum, Durand. in 2. sent. dist. 27. quest. 2.

(i) *Si Dei gratiam & favorem conservare cupis, nullam meritorum tuorum fac mentionem, Ferns in Matth. 10.*

(k) *Propter incertitudinem propriae justitiae & periculum inanis gloriae turissimum est totam fiduciam in sola Dei misericordia & benignitate reponere, Bell. loc. cit. cap. 7.*

(1) Qui erat fiducia saluti in the mercy of God: For, (saith (1) Swarten,) there is great hazard of being puff'd up, and being deceived with the opinion of our own merits, and therefore seldom or never should our confidence in prayer arise from our merits; for, albeits our works do condignly deserve a reward, yet we ask it not under that consideration, but as a free gift. Thus we see how the popish Doctors would learn us in prayer to compliment with God; as if the buyer did say to the seller, [albeits I give you as much money as your commodity is worth, yet I will take it as a gift and thank you for it.] We will not now digress to a dispute, expecting that a discovery of such abominable doctrine will be a sufficient confutation of it to every sober man; what need such rich men ask and pray, having money enough wherewith they may buy? the Lord is engaged to resist such proud ones, Jam. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5. He who hath respect to the lowly will look to such at a distance, he will disdain to behold such objects but with contempt, Psal. 138. 6. So much of pride as is in the heart, there is so much atheisme and rebellion against God. [If then (saith (2) one) thou wouldst be precious in the eyes of God, be low in thine own; the more thou abasest thy self, the more thou wilt be esteemed by him.] And [although (as (2) Pope Gregory said) it be more difficult to deny our selves, then to forsake our possessions, yet, unless we come from self, we cannot go to God.] Self-denial and humility is as physicke to the stomach, it purgeth our ill humours which unfit and indispose it for its meat; it emptieth the heart, and removeth the distempers of pride, ambition and self-conceit,

(2) Esto parum in oculis tuis, ut sis magnus in oculis Dei; tanto enim eris apud Deum pretiosior, quanto fueris in oculis tuis despectior, Hieron. in psalmum.

(3) Minus quicquid est abnegare quod habes, minus autem malum est dominum abnegare quod est — nec tamen superbia despectu relinquere, nisi relinquamus &c. nisi quis se seipso despectat, ad Deum qui super ipsum est non appropinquat, Gregor. hom. 32. in matth.

which

which so (*) suffices the soul, that it can receive nothing without prejudice and hurt; only the humble are fit to receive, improve, and give God the honour of his mercies; and the Lord will not suffer such poor ones to go away from his door without an alms, he will not send such hungry ones empty away, but will fill them with good things, *Psa.* 34. 6. *Luk.* 1. 53.

This humility that is so necessary in the supplicants of heaven, consisteth especially in, and is made up of, these ingredients. 1. In having low thoughts of our selves, and confessing, with (p) *Abraham*, that we are but dust and ashes, and with (q) *Isaac*, that we are not worthy of the least of all the mercies the Lord hath shewed unto us; as knowing, that any difference (as to the better) which is between us and the vilest wretch on earth, proceedeth from the free bounty and dispensation of God, *1 Cor.* 4. 7. Ah! what are we? and what have we which we have not received? What reason have we then to boast, and be puffed up as if all were our own and we had received nothing? as if a debitor would brag and glory, that he had taken on great sums, and was much in debt. 2. In having low thoughts of our selves and best performances; as knowing, that there is no worth or excellency in these, as they flow from us: but on the contrary, much weakness and manifold imperfections; So that the holy Lord might justly (r) cast upon our faces the dung of our best sacrifices: even then when the *King hath brought us in to his chambers*; and when with greatest freedom and devotion we are pouring out our heart to him, we have reason, with the spouse, to say, *look not upon me because I am black*, *Cant.* 1. 4. 6. And, 3. in being thus (s) ashamed to lift up our face to the Lord, and saying, with the (t) Prodigal, *I am not worthy to be called thy son*, and with the (u) Publican, smiting the breast, and from thence bringing deep sighs in stead of words, and having our sins so much in our eyes, that we dare not lift them up to heaven;

(o) *Lumen enim intelligitur in humilitate aperit, superbia abscondit; non secretum quoddam pietatis est, & sanio minus ad illud animus pervenit, quanto magis intumescit, quia ex ipso foras repellitur quo in animu inflatur.* Gregor. in *Job.* lib. 25. cap. 17. *fol.* (mibi) 158. & infra, origo virtutis humilitas est. Illa in nobis virtus voraciter pululat quae in ra diu propria, id est, humilitate perdurat, a qua nimium si absconditur arefcit, quia violenter se in intus humorem charitatis perdit, ibid.

lib. 27. cap. 26. *fol.* 175. B.

(p) *Gen.* 28. 27. (q) *Gen.* 32. 10.

(r) *Ezra* 9. 6. (s) *Luk.* 18. 13. 21. (u) *Luk.* 18. 13.

and when once vent is made to words, this becometh the great suit and desire, *Lord be mercifull to me a sinner.* 4. In being sensible of all our sores and maladies, of all our wants, hazards, dangers and temptations we are exposed unto, of all our sins and provocations, of our weakness and inability, and of our manifold failings and infirmities; the consideration whereof, as it will serve to humble us, so to keep us low; and as it will send us to the throne, so it will furnish us with matter and expressions; it will keep out that boistrous wind that is ready to blow us up and turn us from our course, and make us, with the Pharisee, to boast of our enjoyments and perfection, when we should mourn for sin and complain of wants. A lively sense of our sins, weakness, dangers and wants, is both the mother and daughter, the nurse and milk, and (shall I say) the very nature and life of humility.

(x) Mr. Clerk* in the life of Mrs. Ratcliffe reports, that when she had poured out her heart before the Lord with the greatest confidence and delight, yet used to close with a protestation, that all the acceptance she desired (as to her praising of God) was that he would pardon her presumption (as the error of her love) for taking upon her to speak of his excellency.

You will say, and should the servants of God be so much dejected, and be so uncheerfull while they are at his work? *Ans.* Albeit while we look in to our selves, we see nothing but sores and wants, sin, misery and matter of shame, blushing and confusion, yet when we look up, 1. to the bowels of a Father inviting and commanding us to draw nigh to him, and assuring us of the success by his large and free promises; 2. to the arm of the Spirit drawing us to the throne, and putting words in our mouth; and, 3. to the price Christ hath paid, and to his mediation and intercession for us; with what confidence and boldness may we present our requests to God? Humble and self-abasing thoughts are not (x) contrary unto nor inconsistent with that fiducial recumbency, and child-like liberty and boldness the Saints have used in prayer. Nay, but rather the one supposeth and maketh way for the other; had not *Jacob* been sensible of his own unworthiness, expressed, *Gen. 32. 10.* he might not have been so peremptory and bold, as we find him, *ver. 26.* though he deserved nothing, yet he would not part with God, he would not let him go till he blessed him. And on the other hand, the more full discovery of Gods majesty and goodness *Job* met with, the more he abased and abhorred himself, *Job, 42. 5, 6.* And not only discoveries of Gods justice and holiness, but also

also (yea, especially) of his kindness, tenderness and fatherly care will exceedingly melt an ingenuous and honest heart; when *David* heard that God would build him a house for a long time, *ah! what am I, (saith he) and what is my fathers house? and is this the manner of man, O Lord God, and what can David say?* &c. He knew not how to express the low thoughts he had of himself, *2 Sam. 7. 18, 19, 20.* Yea, often mercies have prevailed, when rods have proven ineffectual, *Ezek. 16, 63, 61.* mercies will break the hard oaks, that would not yield at strokes; and its a very bad symptom when mercies puff us up and make us proud, *ah! should we lift up our selves against him, who is thus exalting us?* and it is monstrous, and exceedingly detestable that Saints should grow proud of their graces, which yet are so contrary and opposite to pride; that this serpent should breed in the ashes and overthrow of other sins, yea, and (y) *Phoenix*-like out of its own ashes; that we should be proud because we are not proud, and should have high thoughts of our humility and self-annihilation. And yet (as a holy (x) man long since complained) *what a rare fowl on earth is a holy and humble man?* O! if we were more humble, we would not, 1. *Baruch*-like seek such great things, nor; 2. be so peremptory in our desires after them; we would not, 3. so fret and complain when we are crossed; nor, 4. envy and repine that others had a greater measure of creature-enjoyments; we would not 5. so hunt after the applause of men, nor be so sensible of reproaches, wrongs and injuries from them; 6. we would not so undervalue mean Saints, and be so uncharitable and severe to them; 7. we would prize more one smile from heaven then all creature-embracements; that the high and holy one should look upon such sinfull wretches, would exceedingly rejoyce the heart; and, 8. we would be more in confessing our sin and begging pardon, &c.

4. There must be *truth* and *sincerity* in thy prayers; God will be *worshipped in truth*, *Joh. 4. 23, 24.* Thy prayer must not go out of feigned lips, *Pf. 17. 1.* The Lord is far from hypocrites, but he is high to all that call upon him in truth, to hear and answer them when they cry, *Pf. 145. 18. false-*

hood

(y) According to the scarce credible history of that rare bird.

(x) *Rara avis in terris aut sanctitatem non perdere, aut humilitatem sanctimoniam non excludi, Bernard. sup. Cantic. serm. 45.*

4. Truth and sincerity.

hood

(a) Isa. 28. 15,

hood (a) will prove a lying refuge, especially while we deal with the omniscient God; we may thus show our folly, but God will not be mocked; nay, such mountebanks do in a manner engage the Lord in point of honour to find them out; they provoke his majesty to put some mark upon them, that others may see that they were not hid from him; such, by their work, do say what those wretches, Ps. 73. 11. said with their mouth, how doth God know, and is there knowledge in the most high? And will not the Lord then be avenged on such hypocrites, who notwithstanding dare draw nigh to him in their lip-devotion, and (with that people, Ps. 78. 36.) flatter him with their mouth, though their heart be thus removed from him? the sacrifice of such fools, (b) Ephraim-like, is a silly dove without heart, they offer the calves of the lips, but yet (as one speaketh) (c) mentem imprecantem gerunt, if any beast offered up by Pagans to their idols, was found to want the heart (as it is (d) said to have hapned in the case of Julius Cesar, a little before the conspiracy against him, and of Pertinax that same day he died) this was judged ominous and prodigious for that person for whom it was sacrificed. This, I grant, was somewhat extraordinary in nature, but it was superstitious in these Pagans from thence to divine what such a dispensation did portend; but we may safely say, that a heartless spiritual sacrifice is a bad omen for the Priest, and though it be too usual and ordinary, yet it never wants a sad effect.

(b) Hof. 7. 11.

(c) M Crooks

τὴ διασπορ-
τα.

(d) Alexand.

ab Alex. gen:

dier. lib. 5.

cap. 251

This godly sincerity, that is so necessary to the acceptance of prayer, extends, not only to the act and desire therein expressed, but also to the principle and fountain, the end, intention and motives; I grant that the sincerity of the heart absolutely, and as to our Christian profession, our covenant and engagement to the Lord, must be presupposed, as pertaining to the previous qualifications mentioned, chap. 1. But by prayer-sincerity here required, is held forth several fruits, flowing from that principle relatively to this duty, and which must appear in the practice of it; and therefore this sincerity is distinguished from that, as the effect from the cause; and we may in the general describe it, as implying, 1. knowledge and

and understanding (which excludeth the popish babling in an unknown language) 2. attention, and taking heed what we utter before the Lord (of which we have spoken under another head; but) 3. and more directly, it importeth seriousness and reality in our desires, so that if the Lord did ask whether we did cordially wish to be heard, we might reply, Lord thou knowest we durst not mock thy majesty, by presenting a petition which the heart did not (e) indite and subscribe. Yet, (c) Pf. 45. 2. 4. and most properly, this truth and sincerity importeth a sweet harmony and conformity; 1. between our expressions and desires, our heart and our mouth; 2. between our will and our judgment, our inclination and conscience; when we not only judge such a thing to be desirable, but do really desire it; and, 3. between our promises and purposes, our profession and practice, our engagements and endeavours; so that the heart and all that is (f) *within us* do accordingly joyn in the work. And thus, if in our prayers, 1. we profess our love to God, and respect to his commandments; there must be this affection of love and reverence towards him in the heart; 2. if we ask our increase of grace, and the assistance of the Spirit for the subduing of our lusts and corruptions; we must desire to be more holy, and must be willing to part with the right hand and right eye; our darling and bosome-corruptions; 3. If we renew our covenant with God, or if we take on new bonds, in reference to some particular service or duty, we must be cordial in that engagement; yea, though we did not (with *Jacob*, Gen. 28. 30.) make any express covenant or promise in prayer, yet the duty it self is a great bond and engagement to walk circumspectly, lest if we return to any sinfull way, the Lord hide his face, and withhold an answer of peace, Pf. 35. 8. Pf. 66. 18. 4. When we confess our sins, we must not lessen the matter, and extenuate the offence, we must not hide and keep up any of our ways, as being unwilling he should be privy unto, or acquainted with, the vileness of our way, and the naughtiness of our heart. (g) *If we cover our transgressions, as Adam, and hide any iniquity in our* (h) *Job, 32. bosome,* do we not say the Lord shall not see nor find this out? out?

O-1 but if the *heart* be not sincere and upright, there will be no truth and reality in our *work*, no stability nor equality in our *course*; *a double minded man is unstable in all his wayes*, Jam. 1. 8. and they who are not sincere in their *work*, will not be sincere in their *words*. These who are not sincere in their *walk*, neither will they be sincere in their *speech*. If the *life*, *course* and *conversation*, be not straight, neither will there be truth and uprightness in our *prayers* and *supplications*; and those who are not sincere in their *carriage* towards men, neither will they be honest in their *trading* with God; their (b) *money* will be counterfeit, their ends, carnal and selfish, and the whole bargain and transaction deceitfull and unsure; *curst is he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully*, Jer. 48. 10. Wo to him, who cometh before the Lord with a *ly* (i) *In his right hand*, who dare not only lie unto men, but also (k) unto the holy Ghost; this sower (l) *leaven of hypocrisie* will (m) *leaven the whole lump*; and though it seem pleasant to the stomach, yet will prove bitter in the belly. *The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment*, Job, 20. 14, 5. He worketh a deceitfull work, which at length will prove a snare to catch his own feet.

You will say, doth not flesh and sense often contradict the sanctified desires of honest supplicants? do not they often find a (n) *law in their members warring against the law of their mind*? will not their lusts and corruptions, not yet totally subdued, alwayes protest and dissent from every holy motion and desire? *Ans.* Its a sign of sincerity to be sensible of, and to complain and bewail thy hypocrisie, and if it be thy burden, and thou desirest to be eased of it, if thou do not hide it, but lay it out before the Lord, thou mayest expect his help against it, and that in the mean time it shall not frustrate thy prayers, and hinder their success. And what matter of lamentation hath it been to the Saints, that they have found such unwillingness to have their darling sins totally subdued, and that they have not only been so unready to rise, but so loath to be brought to the highest pitch of a holy conversation, and that with their professions, desires and prayers, there hath been so much of this leaven mingled? and the more honest and tender

(h) The hypocrite careth more for

words (especially while
wish, and before others)
when holy desires, and to
have his lust
satisfied, when
God glorified.

(i) Isa. 44. 20.

(k) Act. 5.

3, 4.

(l) Luk. 12. 7.

(m) 1 Cor.

9. 6.

Obj.

(n) Rom.

7. 23.

tender the heart is, it will be the more sensible of this evil; hence, that holy Martyr, Mr. *Bradford*, subscribed some of his letters from prison, thus (o) *John Bradford, a very painted hypocrite.*

5. We must pray with *importunity, fervency and zeal*; it is not every prayer, no not of the righteous, but his *effectual fervent* prayer, that prevaileth, *Jam. 5. 16.* It is *ἰσχυρὴ ἐνθυμία*, a well wrought prayer, (as some render it) in (p) which, all our strength and utmost diligence and fervency is employed. Or, as others, a *prayer possessed* (but not with an evil spirit, such as they, who in the Gospel are called (q) *ἰσχυροί*, were vexed with) Or, rather (as Dr. *Hammond*) an *inspired prayer*, breathed into us by the holy Ghost, and in which there is a sweet concurrence of the heavenly influence and of our own activity. Every measure of affection is not suitable for this great work, but the *zeal*, strength and vigor of the heart must be here employed; there must be much heat in the pot before the water boyl: (r) *zeal* in the heart (if we look to the original of the word) is the boiling of the affections, it importeth the highest measure of fervour and intention; and all is too little in this solemn performance. Prayer should be *ἰσχυρὴ*, it should be extended, not only to a length, in respect of frequency and continuance, (as the word in our translation is expounded, *Aē. 12. 5.*) but also as to the affection, it should be intense and stretched out as on the tenners; and thus some ancient Liturgies (as (s) Dr. *Hammond* witnesseth) are called *ἰσχυρὴ*, because of their vehement, fervent and importunate form of supplication. The holy man *David* did stretch out his soul so far till he strained it, according to his complaint, *Psa. 119. 20. My soul breaketh for longing.* And, *Psa. 69. 3.* he draws up the strings so high till three of them become for a while useless, and must be laid by; his soul was so earnest and fervent, so active and quick in its motion, that not only, 1. his throat, and, 2. his eyes began to fail, but, 3. his heart also, became weary, and was scarce able to hold up any longer. But, ah! our bow is not able to discharge the arrow, not because it is become feeble, through too much bending, but

(o) Sam. Clerk in his life, a part of the marrow of Eccl. hist. 5. Importunity.

(p) *Qua non perfunctorie sed ardentioratur, Beza. in loc.*

(q) *Vide etymologiam & varia significata vocis, ἰσχυρὸς & ἰσχυρία apud Voet. fol. disp. part. 1. pag. 1019.*

(r) *ἰσχυρὸς & ἰσχυρία in voc. In the strict acceptation of the word, it is a fiery, hissing heat, fighting with the contrary, Mr. Leigh, his crisis. fac.*

(s) Dr. Ham. on Aē. 12. 5. *ἰσχυρὴς ἰσχυρὴ (viz. pressa) si ad animi ardorem places refertur, Beza ibid.*

(t) Gen. 15.

31.

(u) Rev. 1.6.

1 Pet. 2. 5.

(x) Scra-

phims, h. e.

ardentes

אֲרָמִים

incendis uffit.

(y) Scraphum

denominatur

ab ardore cba.

visus qua

cum mortali

peccato esse

non potest, &

ideo primus

Angelus pec-

cans, non est

denominatus

Seraphim,

Thom. 1. quæst.

63. art. 7. ad

im.

(z) Plurimi

novitate con-

versionis ser-

venter orant,

postea rigide,

postea langui-

de, postea ne-

gligenter; vel

potius ut lo-

quitur aliàs

viz. epist. 121.

ad Probam

cap. 9. Fer-

ventior prae-

dis effectum,

semper ergo

à Domino desideremus

—Ne quod tepescere caperat, omnino frigeret, & penitus ex-

singuatur nisi crebrius inflammemur.

because it is not bent enough; our affections are so languid and remiss, because the heart is not drawn up far enough off the world and towards God; and because they are so weak and faint, therefore they are easily broken off and interrupted by Sathan or our lusts. But, O! if there were this holy zeal and enlargement in our affections, what a notable guard and preservative would that be against wandering thoughts; when the honey is boyling in the pot, it is out of the reach of flies, they dare not touch it; and so long as that holy heat and zeal is maintained in the heart, it is secured from these suggestions which otherways might divert and interrupt it. And albeit Sathan notwithstanding would still assault, yet his temptations would be but as a little water cast upon a great fire, which though it might cause a hissing for a time, yet would serve to cause it burn more clearly and hotly thereafter; but for want of this holy fire, our sacrifices lye cold on the Altar, and the (t) fowls may come and make a prey of them. The Lord hath made us (u) *Priests*, but where is the fire to burn our sacrifices? his Servants and Ministers should, like the Angels, be a *flaming fire*, Pla. 104. 4. His Ministers in heaven are (x) *Seraphims*, Isa. 6. 6. they (y) burn *with love to God*, and so dare not sin against him, nor do his work negligently. Hence *Aquinas* inferreth, that the Angels which fell were not called *Seraphims*; but whatever ground there be for such an inference, yet, certainly this fire of zeal and love to God is a strong guard against sin, and a sharp spur to duty, which must, by little and little, be first worn out of the heart before we become grossly negligent and careless of Gods worship. Hence (z) *Austins* four degrees of decay; at first (saith he) when there is zeal in the heart men pray fervently; 2. afterward more remissly and lukewarmly, and then, 3. coldly and negligently; and, 4. at length the work ceaseth and is left off. O! if we were more careful to keep in this heat, with what success might we pray? An importunate supplicant will not take, and he shall not get,

à Domino desideremus — Ne quod tepescere caperat, omnino frigeret, & penitus ex-

singuatur nisi crebrius inflammemur.

a repulse; if God, 1. *delay*, he will (with that widow, *Luk* 18. 4.) renew his request, though an answer come not at first, he will not faint, but will once and again re-iterat his complaint; nay, 2. though the Lord threaten and seem to *deny*, yet he will follow and pursue his suit, *Judg.* 10. 13. 15. *Mark* 7. 27, 28. Nay, 3. though he intreat and request, yea and seem to command the supplicant *to be gone*, and trouble him no more, yet *Moses* and *Jacob* will not let him alone, *Exod.* 32. 10, 11. *Gen.* 32. 26. As there is a holy and commendable (a) *violence*, So also *impudence*; the (b) word, *Luk* 11. 8. rendred *importunity*, properly signifieth *impudence* and shamefulness; an impudent beggar will not be put off, neither will he hold his peace till he get an alms; and the Lord will nor complain, he alloweth, yea and commendeth this holy kind of impudence in his supplicants, that they will give him no rest till they get an answer, *Isa.* 62. 6, 7. And was it not a shameless and unmannerly earnestness in the paralytic man, who finding no other way to come to Christ but by untyling a part of the roof, would adventure upon that course, though thus Christs sermon must be for a while interrupted, and some tumult and confusion in the house, if not fear, lest some part of the tyling should fall upon them; yet, Christ was not offended, but commendeth his faith, and gives him more then he did ask, *Luk* 5. 20. 24. And then for time, ye cannot be unmannerly, ye may come at mid-night, early in the morning and when ye will, ye shall be welcom, the door shall be opened unto you, and ye shall get an answer, *Luk* 11. 5. *Psal.* 63. 2. and as no threatening, intreaty or seeming command will scar an honest supplicant from the throne; So neither, 4. will contumelies and reproaches; thus the Syrophenician woman, though disgraced and called a dog, yet will not fly from her Master, but will cast her self down under his table, and look up to him for some crumbs, *Mark* 7. 28. and thus turn her reproach into a plea and prevailing argument. And the reason of all this is; not only, 1. because the Lord requireth it; the best of the flock must be sacrificed to the great King, *Mal.* 1. 14. Nor yet, 2. is it only because of the great violence and importunity

(a) *Matth.* 11. 12.(b) *A'ré-
d'na impu-
dentia ex a
privat. & d'
d'as pudor.*

that

(c) Mr. Bur.
groc. spirit.
part 2. ch. 1.
pag. 311.

that Satan and our lusts do use against us, either to interrupt our prayers or contract them; but also, 3. because (as a reverend (c) Divine speaketh) there is in the Saints a holy kind of *desperateness*, not like that unbelieving and wicked despair that was in *Judas*, which drove him away from God and from the means; but this desperation (that we may keep that word which usually is taken in an ill sense) is both the fore-runner and companion of faith, it animates our love to God and his Son Jesus Christ, and quickens our diligence in the use of the means, and it floweth from conviction and sense of our sin and misery, and the extremity we are in, till we lay hold on the remedy which must be sought to by prayer as a special mean. Hence, while there is any fear upon the soul, the sinner, though a believer, will pray desperately. What though he must meet with devils and men in the way, he will venture? he is desperate, he fears nothing; he must *kill sin or be killed*; he must pray and prevail, or he must go to hell. Hence floweth his impatience, violence and impudence: when a mans life is at the stake, ye need not bid him run; and whoever meet him by the way, they must not call him unmannerly, though he stay not upon salutations, ceremonies and formalities. O! if we knew our hazard and saw the extremity we are in, could we be so careless and negligent, and would we offer up such cold and faint desires to God? Who can enough admire the desperat folly of sinners for want of this holy desperation? *Do you think* (saith a holy (d) man) *that Jonah in the whales belly, Daniel among the Lyons, or the thief on the Cross, prayed thus?* And yet, the (e) outward danger in which those supplicants were then, was nothing in respect of the everlasting wrath of God, which not only those have reason to deprecate who are under terrors, but they also who have the surest evidence of Gods love; for they as well as others have deserved his wrath: and they who stand must pray that they may not fall, they must *rejoice with trembling*, and fear the Lord and his goodness.

But, ah! that bodily hazard and fear of the skin, should make men so earnest and resolute, yea, and so desperate as

(d) *Siccine putas Jonam in profundo, Daniele in ter Leones, Latronem in cruce orasse?* Hieron. in loc. citand. S. 2.

(e) I do not deny that the thief, yea and Jonah also, had reason to fear the wrath of God, but their outward danger was that which mainly occasioned Jeroms question.

to venture, whatever difficulties be in the way, there can be none so great that they will not encounter with, yea, the greatest coward will become stout, and will fear nothing, if he must kill or be killed; if extremity once make a man desperate, with what (f) courage, what care, what unwearied strength, activity and diligence will he use the means of self-preservation? and yet, 1. he runs as uncertain, and at a meer possibility and *may be*; 2. for a perishing trifle, which is as nothing, in respect of life eternal, and the incorruptible crown which God will certainly give to all them who thus run the Christian race. But ah! we little mind, either the importance and great consequence of the work, or yet the honour of our Master; Pagans will rise up in judgment against us, who do express more reverence and zeal in their devotion to their idols, then we in the worship of the true and living God. When the Pagan-priest went to sacrifice, one went before with a rod in his hand, and either he or the priest did stir up and arrest the attention of the people, by this *monito* and alarm, *hoc* (g) *ago* (and the Grecian priests, their *πίσις* is thought to have been used for the same purpose) *this do*, mind the present work, and lay all other business aside when ye are employed in Gods service: Ah! did the Pythagorians say (h) *Will ye worship the immortal God, in transitu, in the by, and passing, and while ye are going about another errand?* And what preparation before, what attention seriousness and fervency in the service of God, did the Pagan King (i) *Numa* require and prescribe; so that heathenish Rome in this, had the advantage of the now apostat and popish Rome; their Pagan king complained though the work was

(f) When William the Conqueror landed at Pemsley near Hastings, he sent back the ships, that his soldiers might see no way to escape, but that now they must either fight or die, and thus being desperately resolute, albeit they encountered with a great, well-ordered army, yet they prevailed and got the victory. Bakers chron. of Engl. pag. (mibi) 24. Hence politicians are in reference to mili-

tary affairs, lay down this rule (that a wise Commander should by all means labour to take away all occasion of necessity of fighting from the enemy, but should endeavour to bring his own into that necessity) *uid.* Nic. Machiavel, *disput. de rep. lib. 3. cap. 21. per totum;*

(g) *Vid. Plut. in. Numa, pag. (mibi) 47.*

(h) *Et Alex. ab Alexandro genial. disc. lib. 4. cap. 17.*

(i) *In profectis autem & omnino in sacerdotum festis, per urbem praecedebant, qui ut quiescerent & ab operibus desisterent, jubebant; quemadmodum enim Pythagorici dicunt non finiri homines per transitum, modo Deos immortales illas; orare sed continue in ipsa domo, modo ad id potius parare, &c.* Plutarch, *ibid.* Lap. Florent, *translat.*

(j) Plutarch, *loc. cit.*

doth, yet if it was not performed with that reverence, attention and devotion; yea, and preparation which was due to the immortal God: but the Pope cryeth up the *work done*, and will have it to be meritorious and satisfactory however it be done, though perfunctoriously and superficially, without knowledge, attention, &c. And O! if many careless and formal *Protestants* were not liable to the like challenge; yea, alas! the Saints themselves too often so pray, as if they intended to provoke the Lord not to give what they so coldly ask; for, *qui frigide rogas docet negare*, he who remissly, and as it were, with much indifferency petitioneth, doth say that he is not very desirous to have, and that it were to little purpose to give him what he thus asketh. Ah! that we should be so careless in the worship of our God, while poor Pagans were so zealous and serious in their devotion to Idols. Ah! shall Baals priests: (k) *tear and cut themselves with knives and lancets till the blood gush out*, and all (as is thought) to stir up their affection, and to make them call on him more zealously and fervently (however they lookt upon that as acceptable service to their idol) and shall we think it enough, if we but *put (l) our own fingers so the work*, and perform it never so negligently, and will not be at the expences of some few tears or affectionate desires? we will not be at so much pains as to (m) *stir up our selves to call upon*, and to take hold of the Lord; how then shall we suffer any thing for him, or in his service? While *Alexander* was offering incense to his God, a coal fell on the young mans hand who held the golden censer, but he considering the sacred action in which he was employed, would rather suffer the burning and extremity of pain till the service was ended, then in the least once stir, or move his arm; and thus interrupt that holy (as he imagined) performance; and yet the least of Satans fiery darts, the least worldly trifle and sensual thought, will quickly and easily divert us, and turn away the heart while it is sacrificing to him, who only should be served and worshiped. The Pagan (n) *Emperour L. Aurelius Vero* his motto was, *Nil obstat*; Nothing must be done remissly, negligently, and, as it were, in the by. Far rather should this be the

(k) Kings.
(l) Rivers.
(m) Rivers.
(n) Rivers.
(o) Rivers.
(p) Rivers.
(q) Rivers.
(r) Rivers.
(s) Rivers.
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(aa) Rivers.
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(ae) Rivers.
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(ag) Rivers.
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(ao) Rivers.
(ap) Rivers.
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(bc) Rivers.
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(be) Rivers.
(bf) Rivers.
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(bk) Rivers.
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(bo) Rivers.
(bp) Rivers.
(bq) Rivers.
(br) Rivers.
(bs) Rivers.
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quite of every true Israelite in the matters of God; other things, to him ought to be (in a comparative sense handled in the (a) passing, *using the world as if he used it not*; for here is not our home and rest, but our trade and great business is with God, and for a kingdom that is worthy of our chief care and diligence: If (p) we seek it, *obiter*, and as *in mapam*, we undervalue it and lose our labour: but alas! as that Emperour did not answer his symbol (being wholly (q) addicted to effeminateness, luxury and pleasure) so neither do many Christians, their engagements and profession; and ticular Saints, who have no more but the outward badge and the meer name of Christianity, employ all their strength, diligence and seriousness about the perishing trifles in the world, and seek after heaven only in the by, *using the ordinances of life as if they used them not*; their hearts not being towards them, they go about them in a dead lazy way, without activity and life; they see not their danger and misery, and hence not being affected with it, they act not as if they were in any strait and extremity; they pray not against sin, as knowing that either they must mortifie it here, or else it will kill and destroy them for ever; they pray not for pardon, as knowing they must have it, or else go to hell, and there be tormented with the devils for ever and ever. There is no remedy till once we be brought to this extremity, and accordingly act as becometh those who are in such danger and hazard.

We will not now stay to press this necessary point, but remitting you to those practical (r) Divines who have at length insisted on it; only let me add a word by way of caution; mistake not, and beware lest thou call thy lust, zeal; and thy impatience, this holy fervency and importunity: If we spend our affections upon earthly things, they are mispent and misplaced, *Col. 3. 2.* Ah! shall our love, our zeal and strength be laid out upon such trash? shall the marrow and activity of our most precious things, be thus debased? *Cor. 13. 12.* *supra optimi possimi.* We have many experiences in nature, (s) shewing the corruption of the best things to be accompanied with loathsomeness and noxious consequences; and shall not the abuse (which is the corruption) of spiritual things, have

(o) *In trans-*
curfu, Pro-
verb.

Pla-
tar. *de lib.*
educandis.
(p) *Mat. 6. 33.*
(q) *Cluver.*
bist. epis.
pag. 302.

(r) *M. Love,*
zeal. Christ.
on Luk. 11. 8.
M. Cobbet on
prayer, part.
2. ch. 1. M.
Gurnal (pir.
arm. part. 3.
pag. 553. &c.
(s) *Who can*
endure the
(smell of a dead
carion, especi-
ally of the bo-
dy of man,
which is the
most excellent
of all living
creatures &c.

(5) *Thou
Fullers good
thoughts in
worship times,
p. 2. 90.*

very sad and dolefull consequences to the soul? It is (6) reported of witches, that they say the Lords prayer backwards; this is one of the ordinances of hell, whereby Satan doth engage these wretches to him; and shall this course be followed by any, who hath not renounced his part in Christ? now as for order of words and place, that is not material, the Lord hath not bound and stinted us that way (yea, even their daily bread is put before remission of sins) but he hath fixed an order as to our estimation, affection and diligence, and thus Gods kingdom must be sought before our daily bread; nay, comparatively, and in respect of that, this must not be sought; our labour must be no labour, and our love, hatred, *Mat. 6. 33. Job. 6. 27. Luk. 14. 26.* And thus too many pray backwards, they prefer earth to heaven, the creature to God, the body to the soul, and their daily bread to Gods kingdom. Ah! that so many should walk after Satans rule, and thus carry his mark on their forehead: O! but honest supplicants, though they will be very zealous for the Lord, and impatient when he is dishonoured; yet with what moderation and submission will they ask these outward things? and how patiently will they bear the loss of such trifles? and they will be more anxious and solicitous concerning their *duty* to ask, and in every thing to make their requests known to God, then concerning the *success*, as to the having and receiving these things, *Phil. 4. 6.* You will say, should we not then pray importunately for temporal mercies? *Ans.* 1. Importunity and fervency is required in every prayer thou offerest up to God, thou must alwayes offer up the best of the flock to the great King; cold luke-warm affections in the worship of God is loathsome and unacceptable; we must seek the Lord with the whole heart, else we will not find; if prayer be not fervent, it availeth nothing, *1am. 5. 16.* But take heed where thou placest thy zeal and fervency; when ye seek the world, let heaven be your mark, and when ye desire the creature, let the glory of the giver be your end. Though thou must not spend thy zeal upon perishing things, yet thou mayest earnestly seek the sanctified use of them, and the blessing either with, or without them, and that the Lord,

gives

either in giving, or withholding of them, would mind his own glory and our souls good; and the more direct tendency, any of these things seem to have to these ends, we may be the more earnest in our desiring and praying for it. And then, 2. our desire to have fellowship with God in that ordinance, of prayer, and our love towards him and *delights* in him, may be very fervent and intense, though our errand and business (or rather the special occasion that gave the invitation) be not very considerable, and though we do not passionately and inordinately covet what we ask, as to the thing it self: *The fire may burn, and the heart be hot within*, while the bellows which did blow that fire, and the occasion and first rise of that meditation, did come from some outward comfort and accomodation apprehended to be suitable and convenient, or some strait affliction or bodily rod, as being bitter and unpleasant to sense and the outward man. And so much now concerning importunity, as it importeth zeal and fervency, but as it doth include frequency and constancy, it will fall in under the seventh Particular, viz. perseverance.

6. We must (x) *watch in prayer*. Colof. 4. 2. Its not enough to *watch unto* (y) (*eis autē tūto*) prayer, and for that very (z) end, that we may be fit to pray; but we must also watch while we are employed in the work, for even then we are ready to fall a sleep: and unless drowsiness be prevented by watchfulness, while we are speaking to God, it will be as needfull to awake us, as it was the (a) Prophet when the Angel was speaking to him; and therefore we must watch, 1. over the senses and outward man, for often thieves break in by that back door, and steal away the heart from the duty. 2. We must watch over our thoughts and affections, which are ready to fall a gadding though the door be shut; and not only must we thus watch at the beginning, but all (b) alongst the duty; the soul may set out vigorously, and with full sail, and yet quickly meet with a contrary blast which may make us turn our course: If we do but a little slack our hand in watching, what foolish and impertinent, what sensual and wicked, yea, and atheistical thoughts may on a sudden break in: what strong lusts and (c) carnal affections may begin to stir,

(u) Pl. 39. 1.
6. Watchfulness.

(x) Non solum eis vides
προσευχῆς,
1 Pet. 4. 7.
sed etiam cor
τῷ προσευχῇ.

Col. 4. 2.
(y) In ipsum
hoc vigilantes

Erasm. in
Eph. 6. 18.

(z) As hath
been shown,
chap. 1.

(a) Zech. 4. 1.
(b) Nam vigilare leve est,
pervigilare grave. Marti-
al.

(c) Si non intendes animi
studium
& rebus honestis, in vitiis
vel amore
vigil torqueri.
Horat. 1. epist. 2.

(d) ver. 1.
&c. ver. 8,
9, 10.

stir, and what irreverent and unseemly words may we utter before the Lord? how necessary then must it be for us to keep a watch; and considering how weak, lazy and short sighted our best watch-men are, and how strong, subtle and vigilant the enemy is, and that he hath the advantage to have already a party within doors; what need have we to employ and begg the Kings guard, which is alwayes at hand, and to say, with the Psalmist, while he (d) was busie at prayer, *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and suffer no wicked thought and inclination to arise in my heart?* Ps. 141. 3, 4. When none sitteth upon the watch-tower, or when the watch-man is blind or a sleep, how easily may the enemy surprize us? O I but when the Lord seeth us standing with our weapons in our hand, and looking well about us, he pittieeth us, and though the enemy may approach, yet he will not suffer him to prevail; a watching eye will look up, and bring supply from heaven.

(e) N' δια-
λεπτος.

7. Its not enough to present our requests once, or twice with great seriousness, and then to recoyl; but we must *continue instant in prayer*, watching thereunto with all *perseverance*. We must *pray alwayes, and never faint*: knowing that though an answer tarry, yet it will surely come, that it is for an appointed time, but at length it will not fail, except we faint, *Rom. 12. 12. Eph. 6. 18. Luk. 18. 1. Hab. 2. 3. Gal. 6. 9.* Though there be an *interruption*, and prayer may give place to the performance of other duties, yet there must not be a *cessation*, *Act. 12. 5.* We must not (e) make an end of praying, till the end of our prayer, *1 Thos. 5. 17.* As he who goeth to law, doth alwayes follow his suit, though he doth not evermore speak, or think of it, he never giveth over, but waiteth all opportunities for promoting his cause; so though the Saints be not alwayes employed in prayer, yet they wait, and at every season renew their requests, resolving never to weary nor give over till the Lord hear and answer them; and either grant their desire, or declare his purpose as to the particular, by removing the occasion, and altering the subject and matter of their petition, as often it may fall out as to temporals. If the child die, *David* must no longer pray
for

for its recovery, and if we have holden out in prayer till the Lord thus declare his mind, either by giving or withholding the particular, we need not doubt of the success of our prayers, and of a compensation in better things, when what we ask is not given, see *Self. 2.* and, *Part 4. Ch. 1.*

Thus then to persevere in prayer is nothing else but to continue instant in it, (as we have it expressed, *Rom. 12. 12.*) and to attend the work with activity, diligence and might; the word there signifieth not only continuance, in regard of time, (saith Mr. (f) Leigh) but also instancy and importunity. Of this last we have already spoken, and shall now especially consider that constancy and continuance that is thereby held forth, yet alwayes supposing the other as necessarily included. When we begin to faint we leave off to pray, a lifeless, heartless prayer being no prayer in Gods account; honest supplicants should rather double their diligence and put to more strength, as those who lift a weight, when it is not moved, and doth not yield at the first essay, they fall a work more vigorously the next time; and beggars, when they meet with no answer, will cry and knock more loudly. So, &c.

(f) Πρὸς τὴν ἀποστολὴν, the word is attributed to the hunting of dogs, which will not cease following the game till they have got it: it signifieth to persevere with strength, Mr. Leigh writ.

(ac.) The error and mistake here was in the application of both, but not in their connexion, and, as it were, illustration, and inference of the one from the presence of the other.

As to the other importance of the word, that we may now mainly press that; 1. What a privilege is it that we may come to the King and present our supplications to him as often as we will? Yes, 2. that we are not only allowed and permitted, but also commanded. And, 3. that we are commended for not giving God rest till he hear and answer? and it is held forth as a mark of sincerity thus to persevere. And, 4. a character of an hypocrite that he will not hold out, *Job 27. 10.* and to restrain prayer and cast off fear, are made (2.) companions, and, as it were, reciprocal adjuncts, *Job 15. 4.* And as faith is the mother of prayer, so infidelity and distrust must beget this fainting and drive us from Gods doot, and make us say, (with him, 2 *King. 6. 33.*) *What should I wait for the Lord any longer?* We first say, his (b) promise faileth, and then we weary in pleading it, and at length cast it aside as the Bond of a bankrupt debtor. 5. God is honoured by our (i) following hard after him, when he seemeth

(b) *Pla. 77. 8.*

(i) *Pla. 63. 8.*

(k) Job: 9.
17.

to hide his face and turn away our prayers, yea, and to pursue us (as he did (k) Job) with his tempests, and multiple our wounds; when we will still wait upon him, though we meet with many repulses and discouragements. 6. Perseverance wants not its reward; not only shall our desire at length be granted, but a recompense shall be made for the delay; the answer shall be more full, and with an over-plus of additional comforts, and the mercy shall be more sweet, stable and firm; and as it will be more prized, So usually it is better improven, received more thankfully and cheerfully, and used more holily and cautelously: and as more of God is seen, more of his love, faithfulness and tender care in thus giving, So what is thus gotten after many prayers, much pains, waiting and dependance, will be the more carefully laid out for his honour; and if God should declare his purpose, not to give the particular, a soul that hath not fainted under delays, will bear a denial the more patiently and submissively, and can acquiesce in the good will of his Father as being best for him; and thus can praise him for withholding or (l) removing, as well as for giving, such things. 7. The sad and bitter effects and dangerous consequences that may attend our fainting and giving over, may provoke us to continue instant in prayer; What folly is it, because the mercy cometh not in thy time, to run away from it that it may never come? perhaps it is prepared, yea on the way and not far off, and wilt thou indispose and make thy self unfit to receive, and thus intercept it by the way, or shut the door that it may not get entrance? Nay, if thus thou restrain prayer, and cast thy duty behind thy back, and forsake Gods work and service, [the Master (m) may send thee to school with a rod at thy back, the Lord may send out a storm to bring back his fugitive Jonah's, and thou mayest fear lest thy omission be punished with desertion, and Gods leaving thee to fall into some sin of commission; he that leaves a duty may fear to be left to commit a crime.] 8. Consider who thou art, what is thy condition and what thy trade; and thou wilt say, good reason the poor beggar should wait till an alms come, that he should not limit and set a time when he must be answered, or else he

(l) Al, Job.
1. 21. and
David, 1 Sam.
13. 20.

(m) Gurnall
pag. 624.

will be gone: And ah! hath not the Lord for a long time stretched forth his hand towards us, and waited upon us; he hath long knocked at shut doors, and yet to this day he standeth and hath not given over, and shall we at the first run away from his door, because it is not opened to us, &c. We might have spoken to these and such like motives at greater length, had not such an able Pen pressed that point so fully; to wit, the judicious Mr. *Gurnal*, Spir. Arm. part. 3. pag. 614. &c. But it would be here observed, that it is one thing to *weary in prayer*, and another to *weary of prayer*; the Saints too often (through the weakness and debility of grace, and the renewed assaults of Sathan and their lusts) may faint and weary in prayer, when yet they do not weary of their duty, and desire not to be freed of that yoke: they love their Master, and like his work, even while they are sweating at it, and fainting under it; as a Trades-man may love his work and employment, albeit through weakness of body and some distemper, he be not able to follow it as formerly; and it will be his affliction that he is not able to go about it as he would, and thus he is not weary of his trade, but of his sickness and weakness; thus the godly are rather weary of their deadness, indisposition and unfitness to pray, than of prayer it self, and not because it is their duty to pray, but because they cannot pray better; and thus they take pains to get that indisposition removed, that they may pray more instantly and affectionately; and if it be thus with thee, the Lord will not account his work to be interrupted, by such a diversion, thou mayest be said to pray with perseverance, notwithstanding of such fainting fits and involuntary distempers. I deny not, that Sathan and our lusts, may labour to beget prejudices in the heart against the duty it self, and may so far prevail as to divide the heart, and occasion a confusion, not unlike that which was in that assembly, *Act.* 19. 32. The regenerate part still pleading, at least not disowning, but still maintaining some secret love to, and longing after a communion with God, and the old man not only protesting against, but labouring with might to silence conscience, and to bind the new man, and draw or drive him aside; but yet still it is with the

true Israelite, as it was with *Paul*, Rom. 7. 21, 22, 23, 25. When evil is thus present, there is a secret willingness to do good, and a delighting in the worship of God; even when the flesh serves the law of sin, yet the regenerat mind doth still own God, his work and service: And though for a while, and as to some particular sute, through the violence of corruption and temptations, there may be an interruption of, and cessation from prayer, yet grace at length prevaileth, and the new man must not die in that swoon and fit, he must recover and go about his business, and do his first work (and the first word the child speaketh, after that *deliquium* is over, must be *Abba Father*) because the Physician never leaveth him, but holds him continually by the right hand, Ps. 73. 23. Ps. 17. 5. But yet in the mean time the Lord may hide his face, and not only frown, and shake over him the rod, but also chastise him and withhold mercies formerly askt, and, as it were, granted; a sealed petition may be recalled upon the supplicants miscarriage.

(n) *Iudex iniquus* *audivit, vixit radio, non pietate inclinatus.* Si ergo exaudivit qui oderat quod rogabatur, quomodo non exaudiat qui ut rogemus hortatur? (*August. serm. 36. de verbis Domini*)--fecit radio, quod volebat beneficio--ille qui volebas dare, quod petebatur fecit; quia ille (viz. qui hospes venerat, Luk. 11.) in petendo non defecit; quanto magis dabit Deus bonus, qui nos hortatur ut petamus, cui displiceat si non petamus; sed cum aliquando tardius dat, commendat dona non negat, diu desiderato dulcius obtinentur, cito autem data vilescunt; pete, quare iusta, petendo & querendo crescis ut expias. Seroat tibi Deus quod non vult cito dare, ut & tu discas magnam magno desiderare. Inde oportet semper orare & non deficere, &c. *ibid. serm. 5.* And let us close this Section in reference to all the particulars contained in it, with reverend *Bernard* his words) Omnino oportet nos orationis tempore curiam intrare caulestem, illam utique curiam in qua rex regum stellato sedet solio, circumdante innumerabili & ineffabili beatorum spirituum exercitus; quanta ergo cum reverentia, quanto timore, quanta illuc humilitate, accedere debet a palude sua procedens, & regens vanuncula vilis? quam tremebundus, quam supplex, quam denique humilis, & sollicitus, & toto intentus animo majestati gloria, in praesentia Angelorum, in concilio iustorum & congregatione assistere poteris miser homuncio? In cunctis igitur actionibus nostris multa est opus animi vigilantia, sed praecipue in oratione, *Bernard, serm. de 4. modis orandi.*

Luk. 11. 5. &c. and, Luk. 18. 1. &c. If the unjust Judge, to whom it was a burden to be intreated, was at length overcome with the widows importunity, how shall he not hear who inviteth us to ask, and delighteth in our importunity, and who is grieved and displeased when we ly by and forbear? he delayeth to give, not out of unwillingness, but that we may ask more instantly and fervently, and may be the better prepared to receive, and thankfully prize his bounty, that the mercy may be the more sweet and welcom, and that we may learn to wait and not make hast, &c.

SECT. 2.

Of faith in prayer. What it importeth, by what means it may be encreased, and how it may be known?

Jam. 1. 6, 7. Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth, is like, &c. Let not that man think, that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

THough the Lord Jesus be the Christians *all*, Colof. 3. 11. and all our graces, qualifications and most specious performances be *nothing*; not the least part of our money and treasure, they cannot make us happy, nor purchase the least pearl of the crown: yet as they are employed to attend the great King, and to do his work; and as they may be instrumental for our good and happiness, to bring to us from the rich treasure, and to receive from thence a supply of all our wants; thus *faith* hath the precedency; and comparing it with the rest of our graces, we may (apply the words of *Lemuel's* mother, *Prov. 31. 29.* spoken of the vertuous woman there described; and) say, though other graces have done great things, yet *faith* *excelleth them all*. It is the Christians *ᾠραρον ᾠραρον*, it is the great wheel of the soul, and the first spring of all its gracious motions. And though *love*, because of its perpetuity, be called greater, 1 *Cor. 13. 13.* yet thus it is (4) less, it being, as it were, the daughter and hand-maid of *faith*, *Gal. 5. 6.* 1 *Thes. 1. 3.* we will not enumerate the several effects and properties of this cardinal ver-

(a) Si excuti-
amus singulas
fidei effectus,
&c. conferra-
mus, reperie-
tur in multis
superior fides:
quoniam etiam in
sa charitas,
eodem Apo-
stolo teste, effe-
ctus est fidei
effectus, autem
sua causa pro-
cul dubio est
inferior, &c.
Calvin in 1
Cor. 13. 13.
vid. etiam D.
Pareum ibid.

- (b) Rom. 5. 1. *we are* (b) justified and have
 (c) Act. 16. *we are* (c) sanctified, and the heart
 18. (d) purified, and obtain this privilege and (e) power to
 (d) Act. 15. 9. *we are* (f) sanctification, and of every
 (e) Joh. 1. 1. 2. *we are* (g) good work; by faith we live and act; by it we are
 (f) Gal. 5. 6. *we are* (h) strong and (i) stand fast, and through it, by the power
 (g) Heb. 10. *we are* (k) kept unto salvation and eternal life;
 38. Faith is our (l) shield and sword also; it serveth for defence
 (h) Rom. 4. *we are* and offence, with it we fight, and by it are enabled to quench
 20. all the fiery darts of the devil; it is our (m) victory over hell
 (i) Rom. 11. *we are* and the world, and our protection and safeguard against
 20. Sathan and all his temptations. It is our (n) *panacea* and
 (k) 1 Pet. 1. 5. *we are* sovereign *Catholicon*; its a general remedy and cure of all
 (l) Eph. 6. 16. *we are* (o) soul-trouble, anxiety, care and fear, and the fountain of
 (m) Joh. 5. 4. *we are* (p) peace and tranquility of mind; yea, and of (q) rejoicing
 (n) *David* - with joy unspeakable and full of glory. O! but with-
out *omnium* *morborum* *cu-* out faith there is no safety, nor any ground of solid peace;
ratio, et tunc *ratio* *est* our (r) state is wretched and miserable, and our work and
h. e. a sanan- *est* *omnibus* *morbis.* service unprofitable; for without faith it is impossible to
 (o) Joh. 14. 1. *we are* please God, and what is not of faith is sin. And not only
 (p) Mark, *we are* all our (s) creature enjoyments are defiled, and can do us no
 9. 24. good; but also the (t) Word of life and Gospel of peace,
 (q) 1 Pet. 1. 8. *we are* yea, and the purchase of (u) Christ, his blood and sufferings
 (r) Joh. 1. 18. *we are* and the rich and infinite bowels of Gods mercy, will profit us
 (s) 1 Tim. 4. 5. *we are* nothing. Had not then the Apostle reason to exhort us,
 (t) Heb. 4. 2. *we are* *above all to take the shield of faith?* Eph. 6. 16. all the rest
 (u) 1 Pet. 2. *we are* of our armour being (in a manner) useless and unprofitable
 7. 8. without it, which is, as the hand of the new man, without
 which he can neither fight nor work, and without which, he
 can neither ask, receive, nor return; he can neither pray to,
 wait upon, nor praise God acceptably. Prayer (faith a
 judicious (x) Divine) is the bow, the promise is the arrow, and
 (x) Mr. Gurnall *spirit. arm.* *faith the hand which draws the bow, and sends the arrow*
 part. 1. 20. *with the hearts message to heaven. Both bow and arrow*
 Eph. 6. 18. *are to no purpose without the strength of the hand, and nei-*
 ch. 21. *ther the promise nor prayer, without faith, avails the Christian*
 (y) Heb. 11. 29. *in any thing. As the (y) Israelites could not enter Canaan*

so neither our prayers enter heaven because of unbelief. O I but the (2) prayer of faith will not be shut out, it will not go away and return empty; it will not take, and it shall not get a nay and repulse: *is availeth much* (faith (a) the Apostle) but how much, O man of God? that he doth not express, because it was beyond expression, if particulars must be named; but in the general, *all things* (faith our blessed Lord) *are possible to him that believeth*, Mark, 9. 23. and unto the believing soul (he faith) *be it unto thee even as thou wilt*, Mat. 15. 28. and, Mat. 17. 20. *If ye have faith, nothing shall be impossible unto you.* and Mat. 21. 21, 22. *If ye have faith, and doubt not, if ye shall say, it shall be done; and all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.* See also, Mark, 11. 24. Heb. 11. 33. &c. And so much of the excellency, necessity and use of faith.

But you will say. what is it to pray in faith? and what faith is that, without which, we need not think to obtain any thing of the Lord? Jam. 1. 6, 7. *Ans.* Albeit faith be so necessary to the acceptable performance of every duty, that without it, its impossible to please God, Heb. 11. 6. yet in a special manner it is required in prayer. Hence, an acceptable prayer, is called the (b) *prayer of faith*. It is not so much the prayer of the *man*, as of his *faith*, it is the great agent and (c) efficient, and to it the work should be ascribed; and as faith, is thus, in a special manner here necessary, so some peculiar act of faith must be exercised and put forth in this solemn performance, from which it getteth a proper name, and maketh, as it were, a distinct and special kind of faith, and so, as prayer (because of its special relation unto, and dependance upon faith) is called the *prayer of faith*. So this faith, because of its connexion with, and relation unto prayer, may be called the *faith of prayer*. But ah! how often is this necessary qualification wanting? hence *we ask* and *receive not*; and no wonder though faithless prayers be unsuccessful and fruitless; but since too many are ignorant and do not know what it doth import, and so cannot discern why their prayers are so often abortive, and become as a miscarrying womb, we shall offer some conclusions, partly negative,

(2) Isa. 5. 15
ver. 6. 15.

(b) Jam 1. 19
(c) Fides fundis orationem
fulsa oratio fidei impetrat firmitatem
si fides deficit, oratio perit
quis enim orat qui non credit
--- unde us
Apostolus ostendens fidem fontem esse orationis nec posse irerivum ubi caput aqua sicaretur, adjunxit, atque ait, quomodo autem invocabunt in quem non crediderunt &c.
August. de verb. dom., serm. 36.

partly

partly affirmative, for discovering what it is to pray in faith, and what that faith doth import, which is so necessary to the prevalency of prayer.

Concl. 1. It is not faith of *science* (that for distinctions sake we may so speak) whereby we know what God hath revealed in his Word concerning his nature and attributes, and concerning our duty and that worship we owe to him, and how it ought to be performed; for many in hell to day, know more of this, then while they were on earth, and yet they dare not look up to God, nor pray to him, *Luk. 16. 23, 27. &c.*

Concl. 2. Neither is it faith of credence and assent, whereby we not only know, but also beleeve, and give credit to the Word of God, as being true and worthy of all acceptation; for thus the devils beleeve, they know that the Word of God is surer then heaven and earth, these being only founded upon a word of command, which the Lord may alter and remove at his pleasure, but the Word is grounded upon Gods truth and fidelity, which is a foundation that cannot be shaken; and therefore his Word must be infallible and immutable, it will stand and abide for ever, *Isa. 40. 8.* Therefore the devils tremble (as knowing their prison doors shall never be opened, nor the golden Scepter held forth to them) *Jam. 2. 19.*

Concl. 3. Neither is it faith of *external profession*, whereby we are received to the visible Church, and are enrolled amongst the number of *beleevers*, for albeit at the first preaching of the Gospel of Christ (when the great controversie was, whether the Son of *Mary*, was the Son of God, and the promised *Messiah*) by faith and beleeving frequently, was held forth an acknowledging, and profession, that he was the Saviour of the world, and that he was able to do what he would, yet that was not sufficient for the acceptance of their persons or prayers, *Mat. 7. 21, 22.* But there being then so many dangers, difficulties and discouragements lying in the way, it may be supposed that then there were fewer hypocrits, and that then it was more rare to profess and own Christ and his interest, without true love to him, zeal to his glory, then now, in these places, where we may safely and without hazard profess the Gospel; yea, where without shame, if

not also trouble and hazard, we cannot reject and dis-own it; and therefore believers and professors were then more reciprocal and convertible terms; and thus might then the better be used indifferently.

Concl. 4. Neither is it faith of an *immediat dependance* upon God, as the fountain and author of our life and being, and of all our comforts and enjoyments; for this may be the fruit of natural reason and meer morality, and may be in a *Socrates* or *Plato*, and such as know nothing of Christ, in whose name we must ask, and in whom faith must be acted, if we would prevail, *Job. 14. 13, 14.*

Concl. 5. Neither is it *justifying* faith, whereby we rest upon Christ his merit and satisfaction, and plead his name in prayer; for though this be necessary, yea, and the main ground of the success of our prayers, yet it is not that faith from which our prayers are denominat; and hath for its object not any person or incomplex thing, but our prayers and their success; as shall appear in the positive conclusions.

Concl. 6. Neither is it faith of *assurance*, and perswasion, whereby we know that our names are written in the book of life; for though this assurance be a sweet effect and fruit of justifying faith; yet, 1. it is not constant and perpetual; and what shall the (d) children of light do, when they walk in (d) *Isa. 50. 10.* darkness, and have not the light of assurance, if they may not stay upon God, and call on his name? and then, 2. this assurance hath for its object our state and condition, and what shall be our portion for ever, but the faith concerning which we enquire, is conversant about our desires and petitions, and their success and prevalency; unto which, we deny not this assurance, where it is, to be a good help and encouragement: a sight of our adoption is a good evidence of audience, such as know, that God spared not his own Son, but delivered him to death for them, may confidently believe and expect, that he will withhold and deny them no good thing they shall ask of him, *Rom. 8. 32.*

Concl. 7. Neither is it faith of *evidence*, as to the warrant, goodness and lawfulness of our desires and requests; for albeit it be necessary that thus we know, that they are agreeable to
the

the will of God (for what is not thus of faith is sin, *Rom. 14. 23.*) yet thy petitions may, as to their object and matter, be lawfull and according to the will of God, and yet thy prayer may be an abomination to him, and thou a faithless and graceless one.

Concl. 8. But it is faith of *audience*, whereby we beleeve, and rest upon God for a return and answer to our prayers. I do not deny, that this faith doth suppose, yea, and some one way or other include all the fore-mentioned (e) particulars; 1. that we know God; 2. that we beleeve and assent to his Word as true; 3. that we own and profess the truth; 4. that we depend upon him; 5. that we beleeve in Christ, and ask in his name; 6. that we know the rule, and ask what is agreeable to his will; and, 7. it would very much contribute to the faith here required, if we were fully assured of our adoption and reconciliation with God, through Jesus Christ (but of this last we shall speak at greater length in the cases, *Part. 3.*) and therefore we do not condemn those practical Divines, who in opening up this qualification of prayer, have (f) insisted on some of these particulars, we have only named as pre-requisites; for although we conceive the proper and direct importance of that faith which is required in prayer, to be relative to the return and answer of prayer; yet we acknowledge, that the return and answer of our prayers, doth mainly and principally depend upon that which those eminent Divines have mainly insisted upon: but that not be-

(f) Their imperfections thus import an opposition (v. g. the fourth, as it holds out an immediat dependance) being removed.

(f) Mr. Cobbet on prayer. *part. 2. chap. 4.*
Mr. Manton on *Jam. 1. 6.*
Gurnal's *spirit. arm. part. 3.*
on *Eph. 6. 16.*
chap. 21. p. 343. &c.
Chern. lect. part. 2. serm. 14.

ing (as we, with (g) Calvin, Pareus and other judicious Divines do think) the thing purposely and directly held forth by the Apostle, *Jam. 1. 6.* And in other Scriptures, where faith is required as a condition and qualification of a prevailing prayer, we thought fit, supposing what hath been spoken to this case by these practical Divines, to add some few things for clearing what hath been but only hinted at by judicious Expositors, and for vindicating those Scriptures that speak to this point, and that thus we may learn our duty, and might know how to frame our prayers in reference to the present case.

And, 1. We might here alledge the suffrage of orthodox Divines, who have maintained against Papists, that we may, and ought be certain of the success of our prayers; yea, Mr. Calvin calls the opinion of the Roman Church, concerning the uncertainty of the success of prayer, *impium dogma*, a wicked tenet, and in opposition thereto layeth down this as a principle, that *our prayers do only then prevail, when we are confident of*

(g) *Fides est qua Dei promissionibus freta, nos impetrandi quod petimus certos reddit. Vult ergo sic nobis persuasum esse quod siemel Deus promissit, ut in dubitationem non vocemus exaudienti simus necne. insignis est hic locus ad refellendum impium illud dogma quod in toto papatu pro oraculo babe-*

tur, nempe dubitanter & incerta successus opinione esse orandum, quare principium hoc servamus non aliter exaudiri preces nostras a Domino nisi quum adest impetrandi fiducia, Jo. Calvin. in Jac. 1. 6. Bellarminus tamen postquam hunc (ut vocat) errorem Lutheravorum refutare conatus fuerat, tandem concludit, oportet tamen per spem ac fiduciam qua est alias voluntatis firmiter adhaerere benignitati divinae, & certo confidere Deum satisfurum esse quod petimus. Bell. de bon. oper. in pars. cap. lib. 1. cap. 9. sect. altera conditio. Et Suarez cum Cassano collat. 9. cap. 32. fateatur signum suum impetrationis esse, quando spiritus sanctus movet ad petendum cum magna fiducia (quam ad voluntatem pertinere dixerat, sect. 5.) & quasi securitate impetrandi, Suar. loc. (apud citato, lib. 1. cap. 24. sect. 9. Litem non movebimus Bellarmino vel Suarezio utrum fides hæc spectet ad intellectum vel ad voluntatem, modo fateantur eam includere, vel conjunctam esse cum securitate impetrandi Quinimo, concedit Suarez, sect. citata, saepe perveniri ad judicium ita credibile ac terminatum, ut excludat omnem actusalem bastitationem, & animum ora nisi paratum reddat.

(b) D. Fulk *their success*. And Dr. (b) Fulk, for confutation of the Rhemists glosse of *Jam. 1. 6.* citeth and approveth *Oecumenius* his Commentary on the words, which is this; *If he hath faith let him ask, but if he doubt, let him not ask; for he shall not receive who distrusteth that he shall receive.* Yea, and for preventing prejudices against this truth we now assert, we might cite the adversaries themselves, some of the most (i) learned amongst them, yea even there where they have condemned it as a Calvinian error.

And now, for confirmation of this most sweet and comfortable point, we shall first speak to it in the general; and then, 2. bring some few conclusions for obviating objections, and for a more full discovery of the truth; 3. since Sathan, our lusts and carnal sense will still be ready to quarrel, dispute and depone against, and improve every occasion for overturning this our confidence, we shall bring some supports for upholding and strengthening of it; and, 4. we will bring some marks and characters of the prayer of faith.

1. Then, the truth of this point may appear, 1. from that well known, but little pondered, Scripture, *Heb. 11. 6.* *He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* Hence we may argue, if the Lord will reward, and we must believe that he will reward all that come to him and all that diligently seek him, then certainly he will reward every one who come and draw nigh to him in prayer, and who seek him diligently in that Ordinance; and we must believe that he will never send away such honest supplicants empty, but that he will hear and answer all their prayers. For, 1. not only the words themselves, as being general, do warrant us to make an application, and to descend unto particulars, but also in a particular

note, that shall be most for his own glory and for your good: and if you do so, you pray in faith, though for the particular you know not whether it shall be granted or no, *Mr. Prektons Saints Exercise, Sermon 4. pag. (mibi) 99.*

Thou art not to limit thy faith to the thing itself, but expect money or money-worth, health or as good as health, deliverance or better then deliverance, *Guznal loc. cit. pag. 343.*

(i) Bellarminus & Suarez both jam citatis,

special manner, they seem to point out, and to lead us into this particular, as if this general truth were in some respect appropriate to prayer, it being expressed in terms which frequently in the Scripture do signify that solemn performance, viz. (k) *Privatim coming to God and seeking him*; and therefore we may, upon good ground with the judicious (k) *Calvin*, extend the reward here mentioned to the success and answer of our prayers, and the faith here required to the confident expectation of an answer. But, as thus the words have a special reference to prayer; So, 2. the nature of that exercise doth serve for clearing this inference: For, it being one of the principal and most solemn Ordinances in which we seek God, we may the more confidently expect a reward, and that it shall not be successless. And, 3. the end and errand of prayer being to obtain the blessing, whatever messenger be sent away empty, it shall not: will be, who hath made nothing in vain, help us by his Spirit to pour out vain and fruitless prayers? We might here, to the same purpose, also improve that sweet word, *I sa. 45. 19. I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain?* And we might add the testimony of those licentious Casuists, (to wit, the popish School-men) who albeit they have confined the *Creed* to a narrow compass, yet allow this article a room in it; all of them (l) confessing, that an *explicit faith of God, as remunerator, is absolutely necessary*. And faith (m) *Quinas*, none would go to God, if they did not expect some good thereby.

2. We may argue from the *faith of miracles* (required in some at the first plantation of the Christian Church) whereby a man had a particular confidence and persuasion, that God would work such a miracle by him, which when it did fail, the work did cease; when *Peter* was afraid, he began to sink, *Mat. 14. 30*. Now if such a persuasion was necessary for (n) *receiving power* to work, why should it not also be required for the *receiving of any other mercy*? For,

in *Heb. 11. 6. (n) Admodum subjecti & nudi vehiculi potestatis divina, (in ordine ad quam habuit operans, vel potius instrumentum potentiam mere obedientialem) non verè agentis & principii alicui.*

(k) *Privatim ad se quisque usum & fructum ejus donum accomodare debet, nempe ut clamemus nos à Deo respici tanta illi cura salutem esse nostram ut nobis nunquam sit deserturus, preces ab eo nostras exaudiri, &c.*
 (l) *Fidem explicitam Dei remuneratoriæ esse necessariam necessitate medii communiter docent Theologi, quos citos & sequitur, Jo. de Lugo de virtutibus fidei diff. 2. sect. 2. §. 61. & fujina diff. 12. sect. 8.*
 (m) *Aliiter enim nullus iret ad ipsum, si non speraret aliquam remunerationem ab ipso, Thom.*

albeit the object was extraordinary, yet the way of receiving was ordinary, and by the use of prayer and such other means as we should follow for obtaining an answer to our supplications. Hence, our blessed Lord extendeth this condition to all cases and to all prayers, whatever be their object; *Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, and if ye doubt not, ye shall receive*, Mat. 21. 21, 22. *What things soever ye de-*

(o) Πιστεὺς
στὶ λαμβάνετε,
credite
vos accepturos:
huius tempo-
rum euallages
aliqua videtur
esse emphasis,
loquitur enim
de re certa fu-
tura, ac si esset
jam præsens.
Beza in loc.

fire when ye pray, believe that ye (o) will receive them, and ye shall have them, Mark 11. 24. &c. Can any, unless he manifestly offer violence to the words, limit them unto the gift of miracles? Nay, but our Lord takes occasion from a particular he had been speaking of, to extend their privilege (for their comfort) to all occasions, and every exigence they might meet with. We may observe a considerable (as it were) gradation, amplification and further extension of the promise; 1. If their doubting and unbelief did not hinder, they might do the like of what they had seen in the fig-tree.

2. Not only such a miracle, but whatsoever other dispensation or work, though far more astonishing, if it might serve for the glory of God and the promoting of the Gospel. Yes, and, 3. whatsoever was the mercy they did stand in need of, they should receive it, whether it were miraculous or not. And that none might have the least occasion to limit that promise to miraculous dispensation, we have a twofold note of universality conjoined, *Mat. 21. 22. (p) all things whatsoever*, &c.

(p) πάντα
ἄντα, omnia
quæcumque,
Mat. 21. 22.
& Mar. 11. 24.

3. If the Lord will certainly answer every prayer of faith, may we not, and ought we not believe, that he will answer? But, the Lord doth always answer such prayers, yea, even then when he giveth not the particular expressed in prayer; as shall appear, *Part 4. Chap. 1.* And therefore, &c.

4. None will be so absurd as to deny, that we should believe the promises without any limitation or exception of our own devising; but the promise of audience is universal, there is no exception nor limitation in it, as to the prayer of faith, *Mat. 7. 7, 8. Luk. 11. 9, 10. Job. 14. 13, 14. Job. 16. 23, 24.* And albeit the word of God be surer than all bonds and

and evidences imaginable, and stands not in need of any confirmation; yet, for strengthening our weak faith, the promise of audience is (as a learned (q) Divine faith) more than a hundred times repeated: and shall we yet doubt, yea and plead for our doubting, and by our jealousy and doubting, provoke the Lord to hide his face and (r) turn away our prayers?

(q) Gerhard
ubi infra.

(r) Psal. 66,
20.

5. That faith that is required in prayer is opposed to *doubting*, not concerning Gods word and power, but concerning his purpose and will to grant our desires, and concerning the success of our prayers, *Jam. 1. 6, 7. 1 Timoth. 2. 8.*

You will say, the object of that doubting and wavering that is forbidden in prayer, is the promise of God; thus *Abraham* is commended for not *staggering at the promise through unbelief*, *Rom. 4. 20.* *Ans.* Faith and doubting must be relative to one and the same object, otherwise there would not be an opposition; and therefore, since faith must lay hold on a promise, so doubting doth counter-act our faith and assault the promise. But, the question is, what is that promise which is the object of that faith that is required in prayer, and so of that doubting that is condemned in, and may frustrate our prayers? And I should think, that there were little ground to move such a question; 1. because all the promises being an intimation and declaration of God's purpose, to give to us such and such mercies, we cannot doubt of our *receiving*, but we must also doubt of the promise that intimateth Gods purpose to give: For, as in other cases, so also in this, *giving* and *receiving* are *cor-relatives*, and the one must suppose and infer the other. But, 2. albeit faith in prayer doth lay hold on the promises, as relative to *us*, yet it doth not rest there, but the most proper and formal object of that faith, which is required as a special condition of prayer, is the promise made to prayer concerning its success and audience; and therefore, that doubting which it excludeth, must be the doubting of the prevalency of prayer, and not concerning the truth of the promise in a general and abstract maner: it is the doubting of the event and of Gods work, rather than of his word; and albeit the one (as hath been

(1) *Not his secret will concerning the succession of events, but his will, revealing our duty what is profitable to us and well-pleasing to him; and therefore this limitation needs not discourage thee nor make thee stagger or doubt, unless thou resolve to ask of the Lord that he would help thee to sin against him, and so satisfy and fulfill the lusts of the flesh.*

(1) *Teneamus ergo hanc Apostoli sententiam: invocations Dei summum fidei nostrae examen esse; Deum autem non visere, neque ex fide invocari, nisi quum certo persuasum non invisas fore nostras preces; nam qui suspensius habitant, &c. Calvin in loc.*

been observed) may, by just and necessary consequence, be collected from the other, yet the supplicant may make an abstraction, and labour to divert the dispute from the truth unto the sense or meaning and conditions of the promise, where, though he may allow to himself a greater liberty, yet in the issue and upon the matter, these doubtings, concerning the meaning of the promise, do resolve in doubting concerning its truth: But, that the doubting which faith doth exclude importeth both the one and the other, but especially the latter, is evident from those places already cited, in which this faith is required; *Whatsoever ye shall ask, believing, ye shall receive, &c. Mat. 21. 22. Mark 11. 24. &c. O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?* and fear lest thou should sink? wherefor didst thou doubt of the events, and whether I would hold thee up or not? *Mat. 14. 30, 31.* But, why should we stay to collect from Scripture, that which is so clearly determined in it, 1 Joh. 5. 14, 15. *And this is the confidence* (and what is that faith and confidence, O beloved disciple, that is the great question concerning which we would be resolved?) *that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his (1) Will, he heareth us; and if we know* (and so believe without doubting and wavering) *that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask we know that we have the petitions we desired of him.* Let us then, saith Mr. (2) Calvin, remember that the invocation of God is the chief trial of our faith, and that God is not invocated aright or in faith, unless we be certainly persuaded, that our prayers shall not be in vain nor want a return.

But, you will say, what ground have we to expect that God will answer our desires and give the particular we ask? For, 1. the experience of all Saints, yea, of such as were dearest to God, doth appear and plead against this confidence; How earnestly did *Moses* pray that he might go to *Canaan*, and *David* for his child, *Samuel* for *Saul*, and *Paul* that the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of *Sathan*, might depart? &c. and yet they were not heard, as to what they desired and petitioned. And, 2. this confidence seemeth to be very unreasonable and unwarrantable; for, saith can

go no further then the promise, but we have no promise intimating Gods purpose particularly, and peremptorily to give us such and such mercies; especially those outward and bodily things which are of themselves indifferent, and may prove (and often have been) rather hinderances then helps, in reference to the great end; these things are only promised conditionally and relatively when they will be good for us, and will prove means for promoting of Gods glory in our salvation; and therefore, since we cannot determine when these things will prove good to us and when hurtfull, neither can we determine when they are, or are not included in the promise, and so we cannot in faith plead such promises, nor

(u) peremptorily expect their accomplishment. *Ans.* As no act must be extended beyond its object, So neither faith beyond the promise; it must be our fancy, and not divine faith, which anchoreth not upon the word of God: and therefore, carnal men, who build their faith upon another foundation, are like to these fools who built an house upon the sand, *Mat. 7. 26.* If thou believe, shew thy warrant, otherwise thou mayest believe what thou wilt: But, when the storm ariseth and beateth upon that house, it will fall; and such a faith, like the hypocrites hope, must perish, and at length thou, like to them, *Isa. 20. 5.* shall be ashamed of thy expectation. But, for the further clearing the point in hand, and for obviating what hath been objected, let us add some few Conclusions.

Concl. 9. That faith that is required in prayer may persuade and assure the supplicant, that his prayer, concerning things (x) absolutely and intrinsically good, (and so peremptorily and universally promised) shall be heard, and the very particular shall be given in kind.

Concl. 10. Albeit the Lord will certainly give what he hath thus promised and seeth to be so good and necessary for us, yet he hath not limited himself, as to the circumstances, 1. of time when; 2. of the means by which; 3. or of the manner how; neither, 4. as to such a measure and degree of the thing here in this life; nor, 5. to evidence these spiritual things to our sense, feeling and discerning: and therefore we must

(u) An ob-
lure faith on
a conditional
promise is fan-
cy not faith,
and to be free
on Gods purse
without a
grant; and it
is as bad Di-
vinity as Lo-
gick, so put
more in the
conclusion of
faith, then is
in the pre-
misses of the
promise, *Gura.*
Spir. Arm.
Part. 3. pag.
343.

(x) What
things are ab-
solutely good,
hath been
shown, *Ch. 7.*
Secl. 2.

must patiently wait untill, by the event, (or by what other mean he pleaseth) he reveal to us his purpose, as to these particulars ; especially considering, that albeit in this case there may be a delay and suspension, yet there shall be no denial nor final frustration, see *Part 1. Ch. 7. Sect. 2.*

Concl. 11. Faith may perswade the soul, that temporal and outward things which we stand in need of, and which may be usefull for us, shall never be askt in vain; faith can assure thee that it is the language of cursed Atheists to say, with these miscreants, *Job 21. 15. Mal. 3. 14. It is in vain to serve the Lord; and what profit should we have to pray unto him?* &c. Faith never wanteth an object wherewith it may close in seeking Gods face; he that cometh unto him, whatever be the errand and particular, shall not be sent away empty: for, he is a rewarder of all that come unto him; as hath in the general been shown, *Concl. 8.*

What (you will say) can be the object of faith in such a case? We cannot know what God will do, whether he will give or withhold the particular, and therefore we must doubt and waver concerning the success and answer of such prayers. *Ans.* Albeit we be not obliged, and have no warrant to put out an act of faith, as to the Lords giving the particular we prayed for; yet, we may, and are obliged to believe, that our labour shall not be lost, and that our prayers shall not be fruitless and successless.

(y) *Mat. 24. 46.* You will say, if we obtain not what we desired, what good can be expected upon our praying? *Ans.* In these few particulars, 1. It is a mercy to be found faithfull in doing our duty; (y) blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so employed. You will say, what? thus seeking his daily bread, many will then be found busie at that trade. Nay, but whatever be the occasion and particular, such as will then be found conversing with God, shall abide with him for ever. It is true, many seek, but from the wrong hand; there be but few that look up to God: but, to ask in obedience to that command, *Phil. 4. 6.* and that we may approve our selves to God in the discharge of our duty, is not the course and custom of the world. 2. If thy bodily appetite be not satisfied

satisfied, yet by prayer the desire of the soul may be enlarged, and thou mayest be fitted for receiving more grace and strength for subduing thy lusts: and are spiritual mercies and the good of the soul not worthy to be taken notice of? Shall our labour be accounted lost when we get gold in stead of brass, and when we enjoy a nearer and more intimate fellowship with God, albeit we get no new portion of trifling vanities? Many Papists, when their interest is not touched nor concerned, prove better Casuists then carnal Protestants: we (x) heard from *Thomas, Alensis* and *Suarez*, what ends we should (a) propound in prayer, and that among other things that should draw us to the throne, that sweetness and delight which may be had in a communion with God, should be one, and certainly not the least; now he that obtaineth one of his ends, especially if that be better nor what he hath not yet obtained, cannot be judged to have laboured in vain: if then the Lord hath smiled upon thee, and lifted up the light of his countenance when thou came before him, wilt thou think thy travel lost? If an earthly King would thus entertain and feast, with royal dainties, a mean suppliant, would he not prize that favour and honour more then if his petty suit had been granted? and hath the great (b) King taken thee in to the banqueting-house and spread the banner of love over thee, and wilt thou complain because some trifle is withheld? Ah! be ashamed of thy base ingratitude and brutish sensuality: but yet, the great Mountebank, Cardinal *Bellarmino*, that famous Patron of formality and lip-devotion, hath, in a good mode, proven a better Divine then any of his fellows, and doth more fully (c) enumerat the fruits of prayer then any of these we have named; and by way of preface he sheweth from *Chrysostom*, that prayer is the (d) instrument of instruments, whereby without doubt we may obtain all things whatsoever we stand in need of, either for life (e) or godliness. And then he cometh to particulars, which have place when the desired mercy is not obtained; as, 1. Prayer enlighthens the mind, there is light in Gods countenance, none can frequently converse with him and continue in darkness and ignorance; and this knowledge is not empty and

(x) *Vit. ch. 1.*
(a) But what they thus build with the one hand, they overturn with the other, in pleading for lip devotion without reverence, yea and knowledge or attention; as hath been shown, loc. cit.

(b) Cant. 2. 4. and, 5. 1.

(c) But before he open the fountain he prepares poison to cast into it, and tells us, that those be subjoyned, and which we now mention, must not be accounted the chief and principal ends of prayer, but, 1. to facilitate, and, 2. to merit, must have the precedence, *Bellarmino de bon. oper. in part. lib. 1. cap. 3.*

(d) *Oratio est organum organorum quod si bene bene utatur omnia sine dubio obtinebit*, *Bellarmino ibid.*
(e) 1. *Pet. 1. 3.*

speculative, but practical and influential; such must taste and see that God is gracious. 2. Prayer strengtheneth our faith, hope and expectation; familiarity will beget confidence. 3. It doth enlarge and capacitate the soul for receiving more, and a greater measure of the best things; it will leave a heavenly impression behind, which is a fit disposition for heavenly blessings. 4. Prayer will encrease our humility and godly fear (then certainly it must banish all opinion of merit, and so must overturn that which *Bellarmino* calls one of the principal and chief ends of prayer) but let us further observe the reason he annexeth, and we may consider with what conscience or candor Papists do oppose the truth. For (saith he) we must know we are beggars, and therefore must carry in all humility when we approach before God. 5. It will beget in us a contempt of earthly things, for he that is often in heaven, cannot but look down upon all things under the Sun, and be sensible of their vanity. 6. (As we heard from *Suarez*) it begetteth and bringeth with it admirable sweetness and delight, while in that ordinance we taste and see the goodness of the Lord. And, 7. it bringeth great honour and dignity to the soul. O! what honour is it to converse with a King? but how much more to have continual access to the King of kings? And thus we may see what good may be gotten, and how great and excellent things may be obtained by prayer, though the particular be not granted. But, 3. as prayer hath thus something in hand, and meat, as it were, in the mouth, so it is a seed, which though it seem for a time to lie dead in the ground, yet it will revive; and ere it be long we shall reap in joy; in the day of general retribution, when it shall be (f) *rendred to every man according to his deeds*; all our prayers shall get a second hearing, and new reward; and the King will then say (as he in the case of (g) *Mordacay*) what honour and dignity hath been done to those mine honest subjects, who would not joyn with rebels, nor conceal the conspiracy of false friends, what have those favourites of heaven, who have lye[n] so long at the gate, and have waited for an answer to their many prayers and supplications (though in the mean time some crums have been let fall to them,

(f) Rom 2, 6.

(g) Esth. 6.

3, 6.

(f) Rom 2, 6.

(g) Esth. 6.

q q q

them,

them, yet) what have they gotten answerable to the large and full promises I have made unto them, and to their expectation from such a great and bountifull Lord and Master? and then they shall receive what they can desire and more; that is the great day of *audience*, when all our tears and prayers and complaints shall be brought to remembrance. And thus, though we got nothing in hand, yet we might say, with him, *Isa. 49. 4. Surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my (b) reward with my God.* And we may, with them, *1 Cor. 15. 58. know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.* And though we had no cause to complain, albeit we were thus put to wait all this short day of our life, and till the evening, when the Master will call all the labourers in his vineyard, and give to every man his penny, and will make a recompence for all the delays and disappointments his honest supplicants did meet with here in this their pilgrimage, since none will have cause to grudge and murmur then, or to say that he hath received too little, or waited too long. Yet, 4. our kind Master will not put us off so long a day, though, as to the crown and great inheritance, we must patiently wait, and be expectants till then, yet in the mean time he will give something in hand, he will give so much as may encourage us to follow our duty without fainting, and which may be esteemed a present answer and return to our prayers. And that it must be so, may appear, 1. because he hath appointed prayer to be a *mean* for obtaining the blessing, not in a general way, for thus every duty may be called a mean for obtaining the *great end*, and a step forward in the way to happiness, but prayer is appointed as a special mean, in reference to such a *particular end*, viz. for obtaining such a particular suite, and to have such and such desires satisfied; and thus there are special promises made to prayer, in reference to this particular end, which no other duty can lay claim to; the Lord hath not only promised to reward our prayers as other good works, but he hath specified a particular reward, and hath promised to give whatsoever, and whensoever we shall ask; and therefore there must be some particular answer and return made to every prayer we offer up to God. Otherwise,

(h) *הַיְיָ יֵשׁוּעַ*
opus vel operis
merces. Box-
torf. opus la-
borando pro-
ductum. Mr.
Leigh, crit.
[de.]

2. It must be granted, that we might in our several straits and difficulties, as well go about any other duty as prayer, at least whensoever (and that falls out very often) the particular we ask is not given: and thus, in such a case, prayer will be no more suitable and pertinent to the afflicted, then any other Christian exercise. And, 3. prayer could bring no ease nor relief to perplexed and disconsolated souls, and the Apostles inference, *Phil.* 4. 6, 7. must be groundless and unwarrantable; for if no good, in reference to our present exigence and difficulty, may be expected from prayer, how can peace, quietness and contentment follow thereupon? prayer must open some door of hope, and must bring some olive leaf in its mouth, else the waters would not be abated, nor the storm calmed.

Concl. 1. 2.

You will say, what is that answer which we may always, and in every case confidently and infallibly expect? For answer to this (which we suppose to be the main difficulty) we offer this twelfth *Concl.* Albeit we have no ground to imagine, that God will always give the very particular we ask, yet faith can assure the soul, that God will do that which is best for us in the present business and particular exigence; albeit the captive may not peremptorily conclude, that upon his praying he shall be set at liberty, nor the sick, that he shall be restored to health, yet they may, and should believe that God will do what is best for them, and is most for his own glory; albeit they cannot determine, whether liberty or captivity, sickness or health, be best for them in such a case, and such a time (although their natural appetite and sensitive desire, did close with a suitable object, and made choice of what seemed fittest and most convenient for it) yet they may be perswaded, that as the omniscient and wise God knoweth what is best for them, so as a loving Father, he will do what is best to them; and that though they, relying upon his wisdom do mistake, and with submission do desire and ask a serpent, supposing it to be convenient food, yet he will not give it, nor satisfy their foolish desires, but he will do what is better, he will sanctifie the cryal, and thereby promote their everlasting happiness; if he let the burthen ly on, he will strengthen our shoulders

to bear: and say to us, as he did to *Paul*, *my grace shall be sufficient for you*, 2 Cor. 12. 9. Hence may arise, that peace promised to every sincere supplicant, *Phil.* 4. 7. For having thus commended our case to God, we may securely rest upon his care and providence, who knoweth how to do us good by such a dispensation, and who would not thus put us to the trial, unless he minded thereby to procure our profit and advantage.

And that the Lord doth thus answer every prayer put up to him in truth, *viz.* either giving the mercy in kind, and the very particular that was asked, or else giving what was better, and that not only, 1. by withholding what would hurt, which though it may seem to be a meer negative, yet should be acknowledged to be no small part of the return and answer of prayer, and a fruit of the fatherly care and watchfull providence of our kind Lord towards us, in thus fulfilling his promise to suffer no evil to come near us. For it is (as *k*) *Augustin* observeth) no small temptation to have our desires and requests to become contrary to our cause, and obstructive of our good and interest. Hence, it must be no small mercy to get that snare broken, and when the Lord doth frustrate such desires, though offered up prayer-ways, he doth answer that part of our prayer, *lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*, Mat. 6. 13. And it were good, that we did more mind that part of our copy and pattern, and that when we pray, we did (as that Ancient adviceth) ask that God would not grant what we ask amiss; but not only doth the Lord thus answer, by not giving those serpents we desire; but also, 2. by giving us a heart to welcome the dispensation, and grace to improve the trial aright, he would not suffer us to be cast into the furnace, if he purposed not thereby to purge away some dross from us; but now, for clearing the point, we shall not multiply arguments; but that the Lord must thus answer all our prayers, may appear, 1. from the universality of the promise, which excludeth no (1) object, no case, nor condition in which we may be cast, no time, nor place, nor whatsoever other circumstance, but (as we heard) extendeth unto, and comprehendeth all things

(i) Pl. 121.
7. Prov. 12.
21. Eccles. 8.
5. Job, 5. 19.
&c.

(k) *Petamus
ut non faciat
quod non bene
petimus, quia
ad hoc pertinet
quod in ora-
tione dominica
dicimus ne
nos inducas
in temptationem;
neque enim parva est
tentatio, si
contra tuam
sit causam tua
petitio, August.* 12. 12.
73. in Joan.

(1) *Secundum
causam. Et
peccatum cum
non sit eligibi-
le non debet
reverti ad
classe[m] r[ati]o-
nis.*

whatsoever

whatsoever we shall ask, Mark, 11. 24. 1 Joh. 5. 15; and 3. 23. Joh. 14. 13. &c. And therefore there can be no case, nor combination of circumstances, that can frustrate our prayers of a gracious return and answer: otherwise the promise of audience must be too large, and so must fail of its accomplishment. 2. We may argue from the extent and utility of prayer, it is usefull at all times, and for every thing, hence its prescribed as a sovereign antidote against every evil, and all our fears, *Phil.* 4. 6. But if only then it were heard and answered, when we get the particular in-kind, how often would it be useless and to no purpose? 3. I would ask what difference there would be between the trials and crosses of the godly and the wicked, if to the one they were not sanctified by prayer, and not to the other, because he restraineth prayer? What is said of the creatures, *1 Tim.* 4. 5. may be applied as well to every dispensation of providence, it cannot be sanctified to us but by prayer; and if we ask the blessing, we may as confidently expect it in such a case (though never so cross and contrary to our selfish inclination) as while we use the creatures with much contentment and satisfaction. And we may upon good ground say, we know that such a dispensation is good for us, and that we had been at a loss, if we had wanted it: and hence will flow, not only patience and submission, but also rejoycing and thankfulness; thus *David*, by way of congratulation and praise to God, could say, *it is good for me that I have been afflicted*, *Ps.* 119. 71. thus also *Paul* could rejoyce, whether Christ was preached out of contention and in pretence only (which in it self was a sad affliction and tryal to the zealous Apostle) or in truth and sincerity, as knowing that by the *Philippians* prayers (and none will imagine that he excluded his own, though not needfull to be mentioned, while he was speaking to them) that should turn to his salvation, *Phil.* 1. 18, 19. Hence also the *Psalmist* might conclude, *that he was afflicted in (his) faithfulness*, *Ps.* 119. 75. and therefore his afflictions must be the fruit and accomplishment of the promises he had pleaded in prayer, and so must have been sent by way of return to his prayers. 4. we might argue from the sense and meaning of our prayers, when

(i) *Ps.* 119.

when regular (of which we only speak) which must not be absolute and peremptory as to the particular, but conditional and disjunctive [Lord give us such a supposed mercy if it be good for us; but otherwise we do not desire it, and will not have it.] Or thus [Lord give us what we ask, or what thou knowest will be better for us.] As hath been shown, *Part. 1. chap. 7. sect. 1.*

And thus our faith may keep a conformity and correspondence with our prayers, and we may confidently expect that God will answer them, and grant our desires; that he will either give the particular in kind (if good and convenient for us) or else what is better and more fit for us at such a season. 5. Let us ponder that conclusion, which the Apostle draweth from what he had said concerning prayer, *Rom. 8. 28. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.* It may be this or that particular, may seem to do thee no good; but take all collectively and jointly together, and if your eyes be opened, you will see them mutually conspire for your good. If we look upon the prescription of a Physician, we may there see several ingredients, which singly and by themselves, would rather hurt then profit the patient; but if we take in the correctives, and more narrowly observe the composition: we will be forced to commend the art and knowledge of the Physician, and to confess that all together do jointly concur, and contribute for the patients health. So, &c.

(n) *Obstrepis enim hic carnis sensus, minime apparere quod Deus vult nostra exaudiat, quando eodem semper cursu procedunt afflictiones nostrae. Itaque apostolus occupat, quamvis non statim succurrit nisi Deus, non tamen eos desereret quia miro artificio qua videntur incommoda, in eorum salutem convertat,* Calvin, in loc.

Hence it must necessarily follow, that whether God give or withhold the particular, he doth what is for our good, and what is most fit and convenient for us: if all things must work together for our God, then certainly the several answers and returns to our prayers; and this we may (as well as these Romans did) know, and should believe. 6. Those Scriptures, which hold out Gods purpose to withhold no good thing from his upright supplicants; as, *Pf. 84. 11. Pf. 34. 10. &c.* as they do show, that when the particular askt, is withheld, it is not good for us, *hic & nunc*, so they may serve to convince and persuade us, that when the particular is withheld, the Lord doth what is best for us upon such an occasion. 7. Otherwise it would follow, that often we must

must seek the Lord in vain, contrary to his own protestation, *Isa. 45. 19.* For albeit it were granted, that our prayers were accepted as service done to him, and would not want their reward in the day of general retribution, yet still those prayers that want a particular return, as to the present exigence and occasion, would prove to be in vain, as to that end for which they are employed, and for which the Lord hath appointed them to be used. 8. Let us consider how loathsome and displeasing to our kind Lord, our jealousie and diffidence must be, *vult sibi qui (que credi) (saith Seneca) & habita fides obligat.* There is no man can endure to be distrusted, and shall we deal thus with the God of truth? but when we trust and rely upon our friend, he will think himself obliged not to disappoint us, *fidelem si praveris facies.* And will not our kind Father answer the expectation and confidence of those who trust in him? Mr. (o) Bolton reporteth of a godly man, who being askt in his last sickness (by some Christian friends admiring the singularity of his peace and calmness of spirit, especially under such a trial) how he came to that quietness? answered, that he had stedfastly fixed his heart upon that sweet promise, *Isa. 26. 3. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose heart is stayed on thee; Because he trusteth in thee.* And (said he) my God hath graciously made this good unto my soul. So (saith Mr. Bolton) must every Saints do, who would sound the sweetness of a promise to the bottom. For God is wont to make good his promises unto his children proportionably to their trust in him, and dependence upon his truth and goodness, for a seasonable performance of them. Great Luther was a man of much faith, and it was said of him, *potuit quicquid voluit*; he could do what he would. For, saith (p) Zanchius, every one hath as much as he beleeveth: according to that word, *be it unto thee according to thy faith.* Many want because they ask not, *1am. 4. 3.* and many ask and receive not, because they ask not in faith, *1am. 1. 6, 7.* they are jealous of God, and expect little from him, and therefore he hideth his face, and turneth away our prayer and his mercy from us: Oh! the unbelief of our hearts, we complain of God, while the fault is in ourselves!

(o) Mr. Bolton instructed for right comforting, sect. 3. part. 1. chap. 2.

(p) *Tantum quisque habet quantum creditis juxta illud secundum fidem tuam tibi fiat, Zanch. in 5. ad Ephes.*

faith; we mistrust his Word, and yet murmur because it is not accomplished to us: But if we did more firmly believe the promises, we should see, and have experience of Gods truth and fidelity; and would acknowledge that even then, when sense and carnal reason are most ready to complain, the Lord in great mercy and faithfulness doth deal with us, and provide for our good; by those means which we are ready to conceive to be so contrary unto our happiness, because bitter and afflictive to sense. We will rather choose to be under our own censure, than at Gods disposing; we cannot endure to be curbed and hemmed in; and O I will unbelief say, why might I not have such a mercy? what evil is there in it? and why might not such a rod be removed? what good can it do? were it not better to be at liberty, then shut up in prison, or arrested on the bed of languishing? As if the (q) Patient should complain, and say, why is such a bitter ingredient put into this potion? were it not better to put in the place of it some delicious cordial? while as this exchange might cost him his life: Ah I wilt thou trust the Physitian for the good of thy body, and yet not trust the sovereign Physitian for the good of thy soul? But fools despise their own mercies, and are ready to murmur when they are best dealt with. It is no great matter, saith *Augustine*, to get our desire; for the devils sometimes have been thus heard, but it is a mercy indeed to obtain what maketh for our life and happiness. If we (r) had many of our desires (saith a late (s) Divine) we had been undone. But our kind Father will not put a cup of poison in our hand, though we much long for it. And it is no wonder, while we thus live by sense, and judge by that crook-

(q) Petis agere ut quod ad salutem opponis medicus auctoritat, tu dicitis tolle quod mordet, medicus dicit non tolle quia sanas; tu ad medicum, quare venisti sanari, an non lesioni non par? non ergo curandis Dominus Panem ad voluntatem, quia

extenditis ad sanitatem, quare non habeatis pro magis curandis ad salutem: quid autem absit, quid proficiat, medicus non agnoscit, *Augusti de verbis Domini, serm. 53.*

(r) Petis, nisi sic gerissem.

(s) Mr. Goodwin return of prayer, chap. 9. pag. 49. Optima Le nobis, vel si poterit illa rogamus, Vel non: at damnum cato si errore perimus, Tu damnum a nobis praeter averito Jov. Vet. Pdes. Prima tere vota & cunctis nobilissima templa, Divitia crescant, ut opes & maxima toto Nostro sit arca fove. Sed plures nimia congesta pecunia curas. Strangula, & multa exuperans patrimonio semper. *Juv. Satyr. 10. v. 106.* Ah, how should earthly minded professors be ashamed to read such a sermon preached by a Papist.

ed rule) though we mistake Gods meaning in his dispensations towards us; and because we walk by such a rule, and will not submit to God, nor trust him; and because we are so carnal, so selfish and sensual, and love our own things too much, therefore doth the Lord withdraw them from those he loveth, that they may learn no more to dote upon, and idolize those trifles; and therefore are they held in the furnace, because they will not part with their dross; it were not fit to remove the plaister, untill the sore be cured, nor to prescribe cardials, untill ill humors be purged out. And were our eyes (f) anointed with Christs eye-salve, that we might see our state and condition; and if we were more acquainted with the noble life of faith, we would acknowledge (with him, R/, 119. 75.) that all our afflictions, rods and trials, did flow from Gods mercy, faithfulness and kindness towards us, and when we come home, and shall be more able to judge of Gods Word and works, then we will confess with thankfulness, that we could not have wanted any of these rods, wherewith we were exercised in our pilgrimage; and that those supposed mercies we so much longed for, might have undone us.

And now, I would ask, at carnal hearts, who undervalue this heavenly and soul-enriching exercise, being ready to say, if I might have my desire satisfied, none should pray more frequently then I? but I see little good that may be expected thereby, no income, nor advantage; since they who are most employed in that work, have as many wants and trials as other folk; I see no good they get by all their prayers; why should I lose my pains? Ah! Atheist, dost thou not know, that a little which a righteous man hath, is better then all the riches and great revenue of the wicked, Ps. 37. 16. Prov. 15. 16. Prov. 16. 2. Whatever the righteous hath, be it little, be it much, it is a blessing and mercy indeed. Nay, his wants and crosses become blessings unto him; they are medicines prescribed by the great Physician for the health of the soul, and preservatives to keep us from infection, while we live in a contagious world; but on the other hand, all that the wicked have, their choicest blessings are (according to that threatening, *Mal. 2. 2.*) (u) cursed; they are snares and thorns

(u) Rev. 3. 8.

(u) Aliqua-

do Deus his-

tas dat quod

petis, & Deus

propitius no-

gat quod petis.

August. de

serm. Domi-

ni, serm. 53.

nocturna 102.

nocturna 10.

tumus Mith-

is, Juvenal,

sat. 10.

thorns to prick them, and will prove as coals heaped on their head, to encrease their misery and torment for ever; and their present rods and sufferings, are an earnest and prelude, the first fruits and beginnings of their eternal wo and punishment: The godly and the wicked, while under one and the same outward rod, and in the same furnace, find it not to be the same to both; the furnace that purgeth the dross from the gold, doth by little and little consume the tinn; the godly are gold, and are more refined by trials; but the fiery in which the wicked are now cast, doth drie up their marrow and fat, till at length it consume them by a never ending consumption.

But while thou sayest thou wouldst ask; if thou thoughtst thou wouldst obtain; dost thou think that thou art a loser by any limitation or qualification of the promise of audience, unless thou be an Epicure, and mindest no more but the satisfying of thy beastly and sensual appetite? Ah! is not the promise, while thus limited to thy eternal happiness and spiritual good, more sweet and full, then if it were such a proviso? What? wouldst thou have God to joyn and comply with thy foolish and hurtfull desires; and to give thee, upon thy asking, a serpent to sting thee to death, and a delicious potion full of deadly poyson, because perhaps it is pleasant to thy taste? whether is it better for a Pupil to be guided by a wise Governour, then to be left to his own choyce, and to follow his youthfull and unadvised courses? albeit the discreet Governour will curb and hold him in, and often withhold what he craveth, yet its for his good that he thus dealeth with him; if the inconsiderat youth might have his will, he would quickly lavish and spend his large patrimony, and with the Prodigal, bring himself into great extremity: And our kind Lord dealeth with us as pupils and children; this is the time of our under-age, and if now we had our wills, we would undo our selves: Adam was more knowing and wise then we, who yet being left to the counsel of his own will, did prove a prodigal, and quickly spent one of the largest patrimonies that ever did fall unto any mee man. Is it not then for our good, that the Lord himself

(x) *Quisquis*
polytropus
non quid acci-
piat; sed quid
desipiat; nec
quale sit quod
dant, sed
qualis sit ipse
qui datur; et
anover bonum
obstet, et
male proficiat;
sicque fuerint
quibus dantur,
August. *trist.*
ex. in *Joan.*

(y) *He heard*
the confession
of Pagans, and
wilt not show
who are called
a Christian;
condemning
length; and
wilt show
grudge when
absurd doth
that to thee
and for thee,
which Pagans
have asked
payed for so
themselves for
all, shall they
allow to God
the liberty to
make their
show of their
merits, as
knowing what
is best for
them to have
or want, and
wilt show pro-
scribe to him,
will

will be our Tutor and Governour, and will give us what is good for us, has will not satisfie our (e) hurtful and sensual desires?

But you will say, albeit from what hath been said, I be now convinced, that the Lord often (yea, even then while he withholdeth the particular that was asked) doth that which is best, by way of return to the prayers of his honest supplicants; and though I would fain believe, that the Lord doth alwayes hear and answer our prayers, because the Scriptures seem to hold out this point most frequently and very convincingly, yet there be some cases, in which the Lord doth not satisfie and fulfill the desires of his children, which cannot fall under the exception of non expediency, but and evil; particularly these three; 1. when we pray against our sins and corruptions; and that we may not be led into temptation; 2. when we pray for spiritual mercies to others; that the Lord would open their eyes and change their hearts; and bring them out of the snare in which they are caught; 3. when we pray for outward and publick mercies to the Church and people of God; what evil can there be in those petitions, that the Lord should not alwayes hear and answer them? In answer to this question, we shall first speak to the first case by it self, because it is concerning a personal mercy to the supplicant himself; then in the second place, we shall speak to the other two jointly, because they are concerning mercies askt for others; and thirdly, we shall obvie objections.

To the first, we answer, 1. albeit it be our indispensible duty to subdue and mortifie sin, so that we should alwayes be opposing and fighting against our lusts, and resisting temptations; yet the Lord may have his holy and wise ends, why he will suffer us for a while to wrestle, before he give the victory, or remove the temptation; and though the mortification of sin, and the removing of temptation, be absolutely good and alwayes, yet in the issue it may be comparatively (2)

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better for us to fight a while, if in the mean time he furnish us with necessities for the war, and say unto us (as he did to him, 2 Cor. 12, 9.) *my grace is sufficient for you*.

Hence, 2. The question is not, whether it be better for us to have, or to want the desired mercy, but whether our time of receiving, or Gods time be best; though there may be a delay for a season, yet not a denial or final frustration; such warriors shall at length carry the day, and triumph over their lusts, the devil and the world, Rom. 8. 37. and 16. 20. &c. God knoweth how to time our mercies a right, as *what*, so *when* to give; and should we not allow to his wisdom the liberty to choose the fittest time?

You will say, O, but delays break the heart! and God looks on while Sathan buffet his poor servants. *Ans.* But do not imagine, or say, that God looks on as a meer spectator, he is a faithfull second; nay, he is more, he is our *help, strength, safeguard and shield*, Ps. 84. 11. Ps. 61. 2, 6. Ps. 125. 2. &c. The Lord fighteth for us, and enableth us to fight, and he guards and defends us from Sathans fiery darts, that they may not hurt us; and if at any time they pierce, and draw blood, yet they shall not kill, nor give a deadly wound, but shall, through the wisdom and care of our heavenly Physician, rather prove healthfull and (b) medicinal, these shall, like the Spear of *Jasans* enemy, open an inveterate impostume, which otherwise could hardly have been cured. I do not say, that it is good to sin, or to yield to any temptation, yet such is the power and wisdom of the great Physician, and such is his care of his honest supplicants, that he can make poysonable darts become healing medicines to them, and make these open a vein, out of which shall run no blood, but only venom and hurtfull humors; the Lord

(b) *Ductus autem ad bonum tripliciter dicitur aliquid, scilicet per modum causa vel per modum effectus, vel per modum occasus, &c. Dist. ferat dicitur*

per se ductus --- casus vero privas intentionem sed non extraneam, sicut patet in solennitate
per se ductus --- quod vero ductus per modum occasionis, cum nullam habeat in se rationem ordinantis in finem, nec bonitatem, & propter hoc non potest designari bonum --- cum ergo malum non ducit ad bonum esse, sed per illud quod elicitur in ipso a sapiente Deo, absolute loquendo malum fieri non potest bonum. *Imo omnis creatura potest neganda, &c. vid. loc. Boniventi, in 1. sent. dist. 46. q. 1. quod. 3. sect. 20.*

can make our fall to alarm and awaken us, and a mean, through his blessing, to walk more humbly and circumspectly hereafter; and he can thereby empty the heart of much pride, self-confidence, security, &c. Hence, (c) *Austin* *audeo dicere*, &c. *I dare* (saith that eminent Doctor) *affirm*, that it may be profitable for the proud to fall into some gross and manifest sin, whereby they may fall out of love with, and may learn to loath themselves, &c. Nay, the same (d) *Austin*, *Anselm*, (e) *Thomas* and other Divines, do not doubt to assert, that the sins of the Saints are not excluded from these *all things* which are said to work together for their good, Rom. 8. 28.

And thus the present case doth no wayes militat against the former Conclusion, for, 1. at length the Lord will give the particular in kind which was askt; and, 2. for the delay he maketh a compensation, and doth us good in the mean while, and maketh that delay contribute for the increase of grace, and our eternal comfort.

2. As for the other two cases, concerning mercies askt for others, it is the opinion of a reverend (f) Divine, that we can have no ground of assurance or speed for others, unless they be in the state of grace, and have all those conditions and qualifications which are required to a persons being acceptable to God; and thus he will have that text, *Jam. 5. 16.* to require faith in the sick, as well as in those who must pray for him; and it may suffice (g) he) that in relation to others, we have, 1. a precept and command to pray for

(c) *Audeo dicere* superbis esse utile cadere in aliquod apertum manifestumque peccatum, unde sibi displicent, qui jam sibi placendo ceciderant: salubrius enim Petrus sibi displicuit quando scivis, quam sibi placuit quando praesumpsit. hoc dicit et facit psalmus imple facies eorum ignominia, & quereant nomen tuum Domine, August. de civit. Dei, lib. 14 cap. 14.

(d) *Deus dicitur* genibus eum

omnia co-operatur in bonum, usque adeo prorsus omnia, ut etiam si qui eorum deviant et errant, etiam hoc ipsum eis faciat proficere in bonum, quia humilliores reddunt, atque doctiores; discunt enim in ipsa via iusta cum tremore se exultare debere, non sibi arrogando tantquam de sua virtute fiduciam permanendi, &c. Aug. de corr. et gra. cap. 9. similia habet Anselmus in Rom. 8. 28. et Lyra ibidem. (e) Sed nunquid etiam eis peccata co-operantur in bonum? quidam dicunt quod peccata non continentur sub hoc quod dicitur omnia, quia secundum Augustinum peccatum nihil est, sed contra hoc est quod in glossa, &c. (f) hoc subtilius quam firmius esse recte statuunt nostri theologi communiter in hoc et istiusmodi casibus (sed dicendum est, &c. ex hoc autem quod iustus cadit resurgit capitis et humilior, &c. Thomas in hoc. (f) Treatise of prayer, and Div. provid. pag. 139. &c. (g) Ibid. pag. 141.

(b) who knoweth? Amos, his it may be and Jonah's (or rather the people of Nineveh their) who can tell? And, 3. that however it be, it will be to our good. And as to them, that, 4. we have a conditional assurance, that if they have the requisites and conditions suitable to the promises, they shall have the benefit of those our prayers that are grounded on them; and thus it will behoove us to look more at our duty, than any infallible certainty of the particular issue to them; and to be more pressing in our desires, than peremptory in our resolves. Thus (saith he) I give my judgment and grounds for it, under submission, the case being not much handled by any that I meet with. *Ans.* Albeit upon the matter the difference will not be found to be so very considerable, yet there be several expressions, and some few particulars here, to which we cannot subscribe; and, 1. as to the opinion itself, I find it to be of a much older date; the ancient (i) *Austin* did own it; and the great (k) *Schoolman* with, and from him, did plead for it many hundred years since, making that one of the conditions of an effectual and prevailing prayer, that it be put up for the suppliant himself, and not for others. But, 2. that the Lord hath not left us without a promise, wherewith our faith may close, while we pray for others, may appear from *Part. 1. Chap. 7. Sect. 1.* where we shew, that the promise and command go hand in hand; and that they are like veins and arteries in the body of man; and therefore as we have a command for our warrant to pray for others, we must also have a promise for our encourage-

(h) Joel. 2.
14. Amel. 5.
15. Jon. 3. 9.

(i) Ita (sane intelligendum est quod deus dabit vobis ut ea beneficia significata scilicet antequam verbis, qua ad eos qui petunt proprie pertinent exaudiantur quippe omnes sancti pro seipsis, non autem pro om-

nibus exaudiantur vel amicis vel inimicis vel quibuslibet aliis quia non utrumque dictum est dabit sed dabit vobis, Aug. tract. 102. in Joan.

(k) Unde Thomas statuit has quatuor requirit condiciones, ut aliquis semper impetret quod petit; viz. ut, 1. petat pro se, 2. necessaria ad salutem, 3. pia, & 4. perseveranter. Thom. 2. 2. quest. 83. art. 19. ad 1. & art. 7. ad 1. Pro hac sententia etiam etiam potest doceri. Twissus. Nos (inquis) dum ad preces accingimur, quid nostri officii serio consideramus, quibus profuturæ sunt preces anxii non sumus; Deo illud remittendum ducimus, nihil dubitantes quin operam nostram acceptam habeat, in Corv. defens. 17. m. pag. 256. & Guil. Amel. in quantum statuit nos posse & debere eadem charitate sed non eadem fide ac spe pro aliis orare ac pro nobismetipsis. *ans. cons. lib. 4. cap. 102. lib. 14.*

meht. Hence, in that perfect pattern of prayer, as we are taught to pray for others whatsoever we should ask for ourselves, *give us* (not me only) *forgive us*; and *lead us not*, &c. So to pray in faith, and in testimony as of our desire, so of our (1) *assurance to be heard* to say *Amen*, Mat. 6. 13. But, 2. the Lord hath not left us thus to collect a promise, either from the commands, or from that pattern and example, or from a word, which though it doth emphatically express it to the more learned, yet not so clearly, as that others might see or be persuaded hereof; but we have express promises; 1. indefinite; 2. universal; and, 3. particular, to assure us that our prayers for others shall be heard; 1. *indefinite*, ask and ye shall receive, *Mat. 7. 7. Job. 16. 24.* 2. *universal* whatsoever ye shall ask shall be given, and nothing withheld, *Job. 16. 23. Job. 14. 13, 14.* The promise hath no limitation, it is as full and comprehensive as if all particulars had been named and expressed; and therefore should we devise restrictions and exceptions of our own, and without warrant say, that these large promises must be limited to personal mercies, which concern the suppliant? 3. *particular*. Thus the Lord promiseth to raise up the sick, and to forgive his sins, in answer to the prayers of the Elders of the Church, *1 Sam. 5. 14, 15.* And while the *prayer of faith* is said to save (*viz.* as a mean of divine appointment) the sick, the words need not a commentary; for thereby is clearly held forth, faith in the *subject*, or in the persons who did pray, and not in the *object*, or in him for whom they should pray; for the faith here required is relative to the duty, as its qualification; and so must be acted while the duty is performed, and by him who performeth it; otherwise such a

(1) Thus that word is interpreted in our catechisme, approved by so many Divines in both Kingdoms, thus also those who are acquainted with the emphasis of that word in the Hebrew (which is its original) have rendered it, as Buxtorf, Pagnin, Mercerus and others, and thus is answered the first rule

which in biblical signifieth to trust and believe. And hence we may draw a new argument for confirming the

entire conclusion concerning the assurance of audience, and we may argue thus; all our prayers ought to be so qualified that in the close we may be able to say, *Amen*; but unless we be assured of their success, and that they will be heard, we cannot truly say, *Amen*. Ergo. We must either abandon and omit that usual post-script and conclusion of prayer, or we must speak we know not what, if we be not assured of the success of our prayers, we cannot say, *Amen*, unless, as we desire, so we believe, and expect to be heard.

prayer could not be called the prayer of faith, but rather a prayer for the faithful: and thus it is added, *v. 16. that the effectual fervent prayer (not for, but) of a righteous man, availeth much.*

Now, although no mercy can be received or improved aright, but by the faithful, yet that faith in the object is not a necessary qualification for the audience and success of our prayers for others; or that whereupon our faith doth lay hold is certain. 1. Because faith must have a more sure foundation than our conjecture concerning the state of others, whether they be in the faith or not. 2. We must pray for unbelievers and ask grace for such as are graceless, and we must ask in faith, otherwise (faith reverend (m) Calvin) we pray deceitfully, and not seriously or to purpose. 3. The Lord often giveth grace to the unconverted in answer to the prayers of his children; thus *Paul's* conversion is thought to be the fruit of *Stephens* last prayer, *Act. 7. 60.* and therefore, faith being the object of prayer and the thing petitioned for them, cannot be a condition of prayer, nor somewhat previous in them.

You will say, but what kind of faith can we act in praying for others? and what is its object? *Ans.* 1. Faith, as to the success of our prayers for others, is not *absolute* but *conditional*; and yet, the condition is not faith in the object, or my present disposition or qualification thereof, but rather an act of providence relative to the event, or the decree and divine purpose concerning such a person, his final state and portion here and hereafter: and that object wherewith our faith doth close, as to the particular asked, may be thus expressed, [If those for whom we pray be not reprobates, and if the Lord purposeth to shew mercy to them, and if there be any way and mean of conveyance of such a blessing to them, and if there be any (n) possibility in the thing petitioned, that in that case the Lord will so far respect our prayers, as that in return to them, he will at length give to them what we asked for them; and that though many haply have (o) concurred in the work, and though we have often petitioned that mercy, yet none of our prayers shall be forgotten, but all

(m) *Calv. loc. cit. viz. in Jac. 1. 6.*

(n) *I speak of an extrinsecal and moral possibility, flowing from the decree and purpose of God concerning the future of such an object.*

(o) *Whether in praying for the salvation of one particular person, or for publick mercies and deliverance to the Church; for now we are jointly speaking of both cases.*

and every one of our supplications shall have a proportionable influence in procuring the blessing.] Albeit the mercy may be for a long time with-held, yet the Lord keepeth all the prayers of all his honest supplicants in remembrance, and in answer to them the mercy in due time shall be given. Albeit *Monica*, for a long time, prayed for her son *Austin* his conversion, yet none of her prayers were lost; the Lord had them all on record, and at last satisfied the desire of that zealous woman: but, we must not imagine that God then only had regard to the prayer put up about the time of her sons conversion, nay but every tear and prayer, which from time to time she had poured out, had influence upon the work, and helped forward the new birth of that convert. But, 3. as to the *compensation*, (when the Lord purposeth not to hear and give the particular we prayed for to others) that will not be made to them for whom we pray, but to us who pray: for they being reprobates and despisers of the mercies of God, no ordinance can do them good; but if they be Saints, and yet the Lord in his holy and wise providence will not give them such outward mercies (for, as to spirituals, these shall not be finally with-held from such) as we did petition for them, albeit the Lord may, and no doubt often doth, make some compensation to them, and will not suffer them to be deprived of the fruit of our prayers, although what we did ask was not good, *hic et nunc*; yet, that which universally, and in all cases our faith may lay hold on, by way of compensation when the particular is with-held, must be something respecting the supplicant himself, some one or other mercy to be bestowed on him by way of return and answer to his prayers; and thus, while we pray for the salvation of reprobates, or for such publick mercies to the Church and People of God, which he, according to the depth of his counsel, hath determined not to give, our prayers notwithstanding are not lost as to us; for, though Israelites captivity be continued, yet they who love and pray for *Jerusalem* shall prosper, *Psa.* 132. 6. Albeit the Lord did not give to *David* enemies those mercies he petitioned for them, yet his labour was not lost, nor his prayers like water spile upon the ground;

ground; the Lord did receive and welcom them, and would not send back those faithfull messengers empty; though no return came to those incorrigible enemies, in whose behalf they were sent, yet some (p) heart-affecting and bosom-blessing was dispatched to David, his prayer returned, but not (q) empty, (though it be the manner of men, yet not of the great and gracious King, to send away any honest supplicant without an answer) P/s. 35. 13.

But, do not mistake and say, O I thin it must be better with the supplicant when his prayer for others is not heard as to them, and when they get no good by it, because then it returneth into his own bosom, and the good redounds to him: Do not (I say) entertain such a conceit; for although we now only mentioned the personal return made to the supplicant, when his desire for others was not granted, that being the present case to which we should speak, and a notable encouragement to to the conscionable and constant performance of that duty, whatever might be it's fruit and success, as to those for whom it were performed; yet we did not exclude that personal return which every petitioner may expect, when the Lord doth fulfill his desire towards others; we shall not fair the worse because it goeth well with others, nor shall the Lord be less kind to us, because for our sake he sheweth kindness to others; we shall not lose because others do gain by our trading; our God hath blessings enew to bestow, and though he answer the supplication, he will not let the messenger go away without his wages; he shall get something in hand, but that is not all nor the main, but they who (by their prayers, exhortations, &c.) turn (r) many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever, and ever, Dan. 12. 3. not only their prayers and endeavours shall come in remembrance, but also the fruit and success thereof,

and labourers shall be glorious in the eyes of their Master, and their reward shall be with their God, Isa. 40. 4, 5. Thus, when God blesseth his own Ordinance, as that will cause the hearts of honest labourers to rejoice, so the Lord may, out of his good pleasure and sovereign mercy, crown that mercy with other mercies, both to him who did pray, and to him for whom supplication was made,

(p) And this may be the occasion of that expression, and the reason why Davids prayer is said to return into his bosom, viz. because it did bring along with it some seasonable or some considerable mercy; for, what we take into our bosom must lye near the heart, and have some room in the estimation.

(q) Esai. non est pro fit, ego solum non sum frustratus mea mercede gloss. in loc. vid. etiam Lyr. ibid.

(r) Though Gods (servants and messengers labour in vain, and though Israel be not gathered, yet honest suppli-

but not to obstruct and hinder their mercies, but rather to promote their happiness.

If it be here askt, whether the former assertion concerning Gods hearing and answering of all our prayers so far, as alwayes to do what is best for us, in the particular which we desired and petitioned, whether (I say) that hath place in this case? *Ans.* That assertion it self, without any further explication, might have prevented such a question; for, while the mater of our prayer is not personal, and doth not concern us but others, it seemeth a little impertinent to ask, whether the Lord, when he giveth not the particular askt, (*viz.* to others) doth that which is best for us: for what doth not concern us cannot be said to be more or less convenient for us. But, 1. albeit what we ask for others doth not concern us, as to our personal loss or advantage, (except when we ask publick mercies for the Church, or Incorporation whereof we are members) yet to a believer, (who already hath a right to all personal happiness and felicity) no compensation can be made for those spiritual mercies which he doth ask for his brethren, or for publick mercies to the Church, her deliverance, peace, prosperity, encrease, &c. Nay, a *Moses* and *Paul* could subscribe a very sad doom against themselves, in reference to their own crown and personal state; (1) *Moses* that his name might be blotted out of Gods Book, and (2) *Paul* that he might be accursed from Christ, that it might go well with their brethren and Gods ancient people and Church.

And yet even in this, as in all other cases, it is certain, that God alwayes doth what is best and most subservient to those high and great ends, *viz.* the manifestation of his own glory, and the promoting the good and eternal happiness of the Elect; and as to those great things, to which all other things must stoop and be in subordination, so also our prayers, and what we ask, whether for our selves or others, must be askt with an eye to this noble mark: and we should not desire nor expect a return, but in subordination to this high end. And therefore, when the event doth discover his purpose not to give the particular we desired for others, we must submit

(1) Exod. 32.

32.

(2) Rom. 9.

3.

to his holy and wise dispensation, and take encouragement not only from the returning of our prayers into our bosoms, and that personal reward we may confidently expect, but also from the former consideration, and while we reflect upon the last and ultimate end of our prayers; knowing that he who is infinite in wisdom and counsel, hath carried on the same by means unknown to us, yet fittest for the purpose. And if we know that Christs kingdom doth come, and that Gods glory is thus advanced, we have no cause to complain, whatever otherwise may be the success of our prayers. And thus, if we be considered as self-denied Christians, looking most to the will and honour of our Master, it may in some sense and respect be said, that in the proposed case the Lord doth that which is best for us, and what we most desire; but otherwise, if we speak of that dispensation absolutely and in it self, or in relation to its proper rule, *viz.* the revealed will and word of God, which is the only rule of our desires, and which must determine the particulars which we may make choyce of, *yea*, in reference to that great end, which yet the Lord may promote and carry on by what means seemeth good to the holy counsel of his blessed will; thus (I say) such a sad dispensation towards our neighbours and brethren, may be very bitter and afflictive to us; as it was to *Moses, Paul, Samuel, Jeremiab*, and to the rest of the Saints from time to time.

So much for confirmation and explication of this sweet point, concerning the certainty of the success of prayer; now we come to objections. But we shall not meddle with (u) *Bellarmines* arguments against the certainty of faith, and the assurance of salvation; these being so fully answered by many Divines, and it not being our purpose now to speak to these questions (albeit this our case doth much depend upon those truths asserted by orthodox Divines against Papists) but we shall only propound those objections, which we conceive to militate directly against the present point, which hath not been much debated.

You will say, albeit I abominat the popish uncertainty of faith, yet, alas! I fear my own state and condition, that I

(u) *Bellar. de justif. lib. 1. cap. 31, 6, 8, 9, 10 & lib. 3. cap. 4 & seqq.*

1. Obj.

do

do not believe; and how shall I be assured of the success of my prayers? I think none but Atheists dare question the truth of the promises, or doubt of Gods power; and I know that he doth alwayes hear his children when they cry, but I know not if I be one of that number; and should such a one as I pray in confidence? *Ans.* 1. I deny not, that our confidence in prayer must, in some proportion, answer our assurance of our state and adoption, and therefore such as would pray in faith, should (x) *try and examine themselves, whether they be in the faith.* Not that they ought to (as many precious ones do) hold themselves upon the rack, and live in perplexing fears and doubtings, by running to uncertain marks, and making the priviledges of some eminent Christians, a touch-stone to try the reality of their profession; and by making the *mark* and scope at which they should aim, a *mark* and character for trying their state and condition: I will say no more now to such, but that it were better that much of that time, which is spent in trying, were employed in strengthening their graces; God is more glorified by believing, then doubting; that darkness, as it is uncomfortable to us, so it is displeasing to God, and hindreth his work; for what is that duty that can be cheerfully performed in such a state? And while we divert to the work of examination, we cannot close with Christ by a direct act of faith, which of purpose then we do suspend. But yet, 2. the matter would once be put out of question, and if thou never yet came that length, now is the time thou art called to that work: Ah! delay no longer, not for one hour, *to give all diligence to make your calling and election sure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. Not by maintaining a debate which will prove endless, nor yet so much by reflecting upon the frame of thy heart, and thy former obedience (albeit we do not simply condemn that course, or deny that some light may be gotten from thence) for thus thou mayest be at a loss, and these marks thou hast run to, may be obscure, or not reciprocal, and may stand in need of other marks for knowing, 1. when, 2. what weight may be laid upon them; and, 3. whether or not yet they be wrought in thee. But thy *surest* course were instantly to resolve

Ans.

(x) 2 Cor.
13. 5.

resolve the question, by closing with Christ, as thy *Lord* and *Saviour*; and then thou hast answered all the scruples and objections that devils or men, or thy own unbelieving heart could forge; For, 1. if thou hast closed with him as thy Saviour, by relying and resting upon him alone for salvation, here is thy faith; and if thou hast taken on his sweet yoke, and art honestly resolved to acknowledge him for thy only Lord and Master, here is the fruit and trial of thy faith; and having thus once made sure thy state, wilt thou again raise that building to the foundation, and suffer thy fears so far to prevail, as to bring thee again under the Spirit of bondage? Ah! be not so foolish and cruel to your own soul, but mark, and lay up that evidence and experience for time to come, that by the blessing of God it may guard the heart from after-terrors and debates, unless that light be eclipsed, or rather utterly overthrown, by thy *returning (y) to folly*, (y) Pl. 85, 8.

But, 3. if notwithstanding all thy diligence and endeavours, thou hast not yet attained to such a measure of assurance, that thou canst say [I know I am in Christ] yet if thou seriously desire to be found in him, and if thou continue in that diligence, to make thy election sure, if thou love him, and carefully abstain from every thing that may displease him, and hast respect to all his commandments, thou needst not be afraid, or ashamed, Pl. 119, 6. thou mayest draw nigh in faith, and confidently plead the promises; thy child-like affection, is ground enough to beget this child-like confidence and boldness, Thou, who hast the love and heart of a Son, needst not fear while thou drawest nigh to thy kind Father. O! but thou wilt say, I dare not call him Father. *Ans.* We shall speak to this weighty question, *Part. 3. Chap. 1.* But now let me ask, if he be not thy Father, who hath wrought these filial affections in thee? unless thou hadst received the Spirit of adoption, thou couldst not have the heart and love of a Son; such fruit will not of it self arise and spring up in our barren desert and wilderness. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us,* He is the first lover and suiter; thou couldst not love him, unless he

he had prevented thee with his free love. *We love him be-
cause he first loved us*, 1 Joh. 4. 10, 19. why then is there
fear in thy love? and why doth not thy love cast out fear,
ver. 18.

4. If thy fear and jealousie yet continue, I have one word
more unto thee; albeit I cannot excuse, and desire not to
extenuat thy fault, for thus harbouring so long such thoughts
of distrust, yet I must not conceal the bowels and loving
kindnesse of the Lord: If this thy unbelief doth only arise
from a mis-apprehension of thine own state and condition;
as it doth not null thy *interest* in the promise, so neither
will it hinder its performance and accomplishment to thee;
albeit the Child in the fit of a fever will not acknowledge
his Father, but will perhaps deny that he hath any interest
in him, will the Father therefore disinherit such a Son? or
will not his tender bowels the rather stir towards the Child,
to pity and compassionat him the more, while he seeth
him into such a condition? And ah! what is the state of
desertion, and such darkness, but a feverish distemper of the
soul, refusing to acknowledge its heavenly Father? and will
he therefore forget or disown his Saintes in such a forlorn
case? Nay, *though we thus believe not, yet he abideth faith-
full, he cannot deny himself*, his word and truth, his pro-
mises and watchfull providence, and that relation under
which he standeth towards such, 2 Tim. 2. 13. He hath
still the heart of a Father, *sam* (x) *pius nemo, sam pater ne-
mo*, and he will not cast off his paternal care, he will hear
when thou cryest to him, albeit thou be jealous of his love,
and of thy interest in him. Indeed, if thou didst distrust his
truth, mercy and power, the case were altered; but since
thou darst not once doubt of these, but thy fear proceedeth
only from thine own bowels, because thou thinkest that thou
art not such a one, nor so qualified as to have an interest in
the promise, and to be an object of Gods mercy and love,

(x) Tertull.
de panis.

(a) We may
here apply
what is spoken
of another
kind of unbel-
ief, R. m. 3. 31

(a) Shall thy unbelief make the faith and promise of God
without effect?

Thus thou shalt not want necessities, albeit several things
that may contribute for thy comfort, may for a while be sus-
pended

pended, because of thy distrust and jealousy. You will say; and is it not sad, that our God should frown, and (as it were) hide his face for a season, and shut out our prayers.

Ans. But where must the blame be laid? If ye will be suspicious, and fear without ground, may not the Lord answer you according to your fear, and give you ground to complain, (but not of his word or (b) work, but of your own heart, and its distrust and unbelief) if the Child will reject those medicines the Father hath provided for curing his distemper, he may justly chide with, and hide his face from such a Son. But who dare limit the Lord, either as to time when, how long, or how often; or as to the manner and measure, how far, and what way he will hide his face, and by what dispensations he will manifest his displeasure; he may when he will disappoint thy fear, and do beyond what thou couldst expect, and thereby melt thy heart, cure thy distemper, and banish thy fear. It would go ill with the Saints, if the Lord did alwayes deal with them according to their fears, even as to their comforts, and the accomodations of the outward man.

(b) As if those
were to be
blamed.

2. *Obj.* There are such difficulties and debates concerning the extent and meaning of temporal promises, that it can hardly be expected that weak beleivers, and such as have not attained to a considerable measure of knowledge, should be able to extricate themselves out of such a labyrinth, and certainly beleve the performance of that bond, the contents and tenor whereof they are ignorant of. *Ans.* Albeit there may be some controversie and difficulty concerning the meaning of some particular promises; considered singly and by themselves; yet there is no good thing thou canst desire, that is not clearly held forth, or comprehended in some one or more promises; as hath been shown *Part 1. Chap. 7. Sect. 2.* And, 2. we do not affirm that our faith should lay hold on the particular held forth in the promise absolutely and peremptorily, but only disjunctively; that God will either give the particular in kind, or the equivalent, but better to us, at such a time and season; as hath been there also shown. And that there is no ground for any to

2. *Obj.*

question such a disjunction alternative, may appear from what hath been here said. But yet, we do not require such an explicit, particular and determinat knowledge of both parts of the disjunction, as we have now for explication described; but if in our addresses to God there be these two, which seem to be so essential and necessary to the least measure of faith, *viz.* 1. a believing that God is; and, 2. that he is a rewarder of them that seek him, *Heb.* 11. 6. If we confidently expect a reward, though we cannot peremptorily determine what or when it shall be given, nor whether it shall be in reference to the present exigence, I dare not affirm that such a prayer will be shut out, or such a supplicant sent away empty. Albeit it be matter of sad regrate, that we do not more clearly and particularly know what we may expect from God, he having so fully revealed his mind thereunto, yet, those weak and less-knowing Christians need not fear, if, 1. they have that dogmatical faith and know that there is a God, and that he is such, as he hath revealed himself in his Scriptures, as to his infinite nature and the trinity of persons, and those divine attributes and properties which are incommunicable to any creature, that Christ is the way and the life, that none can come to the Father but by him, &c. 2. If they believe that their labour shall not be lost, he being a rewarder of all them who diligently seek him, and particularly, as to the present duty, they know that he is a (c) prayer-hearing God, albeit they cannot determine the particular mercy he will give by way of return thereto, yet they know that their prayer shall not want an answer, and that it is not in vain (as those wicked ones did blaspheme, *Job.* 31. 15.) to pray unto him.

(c) *Psa.* 65. 3.

3. Obj.

(d) *Mr. Spur-*
row, Wells of
Salvation, ch.
16.

3. Obj. It is a received axiom among practical Divines, that temporal promises are to be understood, *cum exceptione crucis*; hence Mr. (d) *Spurrow* layeth down this as a rule for the right understanding of these promises, that they are to be expounded with the reservation and exception of the cross: and if the promises cannot withhold the Lord from chastising the Saints with rods and afflictions, how shall their (c) prayers be able to do it? especially since prayer must be

be grounded on the promise. *Ans.* Albeit there be a truth in that affection, that the Lord may chasten his servants with whatsoever rod he will, yet, why this should be propounded as a limitation of the promise, I know not: and I would ask, whether the Lord doth at any time afflict the Saints but for their good? by this he is distinguished from earthly parents, that they chasten many times out of passion and anger, and without discretion after their own pleasure; but he only for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness, *Heb. 12. 10.* And if the Lord never correct us, but that by that rod he may promote our spiritual good and holiness, can we imagine that he will withhold any temporal mercy we ask from him, (which is a sort of affliction and correction, yea some times very sad and bitter) unless he purposed to do us more good by such a dispensation, then if we had received what we desired. Hence it must necessarily follow, that the Lord doth never withhold what we ask, but when it is better to want then to have such a supposed mercy; and therefore, he must do what is best for us in such a condition, and this we may believe and confidently expect in all our addresses unto him; and when we get not what we askt, we may be perswaded that it was not good and convenient for us at such a season, that comparatively it was not good, nor so fit and expedient for us as the present dispensation; which therefore must not be looked upon as an exception from the promise, but rather as an amplification and further extension of the promise, and an object of that promise, *to withhold good from them that walk uprightly, and to suffer no evil to come near them.* Hence the same (f) Author acknowledgeth, that the faith required, *James 1. 6.* albeits it be not the faith of a particular persuasion, that God will give the very thing it self that we beg of him, yet it is the faith of submission by which we resolve our prayers into his will, and believe that he will do whatever is best for our good and his glory. And this (saith he) was the faith that our Lord Jesus Christ did put forth in his prayer, when he said, not my will, but thy will be done. And thus we are agreed; neither do I dissent from what he subjoyneth, *viz. that although*

(f) *See. Spurr,
ibid pag. 232.*

God may sometimes assure, and incline the hearts of his children that are importunate wrestlers in prayer, to be confident of granting the very particular temporal blessing that they seek, yet this is a confidence, that is rather begotten by the Spirit in the height and vigour of prayer, then brought with us unto the duty. Sometimes (saith he) (such a confidence may be; but it is neither ordinary nor usual.

(g) Nemo nostrum parvipendat orationem suam; dico enim vobis quod ipse ad quem oramus, non parvipendit eam, priusquam egressa sit ab ore vestro, ipse eam scribi habet in libro suo, et unum ex duobus indubitanter sperare possumus; quoniam aut dabit quod petimus, aut quod nobis erit melius: nos enim quid oramus sicut oportet

We may shut up this particular with the words of zealous Bernard. Let none of the Saints (saith (g) this reverend ancient) undervalue his prayer, for he to whom we pray doth not undervalue it: before it proceed out of our mouth, he cansteth Write it in his book, and one of two we may most confidently expect, that he will either give what we ask, or that which will be better for us. He pitieth our ignorance, and will not give when it is not fit, or what would not profit us, yet such is his love and care, that he will not suffer our prayers to return empty, but when he giveth not what we out of ignorance (not knowing the hurt that might come to us thereby) do ask, he will make a compensation and commutation, and will convert it in a more profitable gift.

Now we come to some grounds and encouraging considerations, which may support our weak faith under all the temptations and objections which Sathan and our lusts, (b) sense and carnal reason can suggest; and, 1. the infinit mercy and tender bowels of our God, if known and duly pondered, may silence our unbelief, and banish all our fears; when we draw nigh to him: his tender mercies are (i) over all his works. Ps. 145. 9. his mercy is great unto the heavens, Ps.

ter deficiente, sed miseretur ille super ignorantia nostra, et orationem benigne suscipiens quod nobis aut omnino non est utile, aut non tam cito dare necesse est, minime tribuit, tamen infra nosa non erit; quoniam quidem tanta super ea cura est Deo tuo, ut quoties ignorans queris quod tibi inutile est, non te audias super hoc, habet in mod. devotis. cap. 6.

(h) Stat nulla dia mortalibus usquam Fortuna titubante fides---Silius. 11. L.

(i) Nemo est hominum, vel etiam diabolorum qui dicere possit, se non esse participem misericordiae Dei, Zanch. de natur. Dei lib. 4. c. 3.

57. 10. What is said of one stream, may well be applied to the great Ocean, from which it floweth; as a small part; what is said of the word of promise, and Gods fidelity in accomplishing it, *Pf.* 138. 2. may truly be said of his mercy and those bowels from which the promises did spring, viz. that he hath magnified that attribute above all his name. Albeit all his excellencies and properties, as they are in himself, be equal and infinite; yet if we consider them, as to their exercise and execution, and their egress (as they speak) towards the creatures, his mercy (k) doth far out-shine all the rest; and thus it hath the first and chief room in his name, *Exod.* 3. 6. 7. and is most emphatically branched forth in several particulars; and a word is only added concerning his justice to guard against the abuse of the former most glorious attribute, by the presumption of secure sinners: And this is the attribute which the Psalmist, in praising of God, in on Hymn must repeat twenty six several times, *Pf.* 136. See also *Pf.* 36. *Pf.* 103. *Pf.* 86. 5. *Jonab.* 4. 2. *Joel.* 2. 13. *Exod.* 20. 6. &c. And albeit the Lord being provok't by the ungratiente and rebellion of devils and men, doth exercise his justice and severity upon the creatures he hath made, yet he doth it not willingly, but, as it were, by way of (l) constraint, *Lam.* 3. 33. O, but he delighteth in mercy. That is (as it were) his (m) native, and (as Calvin speak

(k) Divina misericordia tanta est, ut si quis universa peccata totius mundi commississet, & doleret quod tam bonum Dominum, tam superbe offendisset; firmiterque proponeret amplius absti-

nere, Deus talem nunquam damnavit: sed stultitia sua per veritatem (ut conqueritur, August. de temp. term. 109.) sic voluit Deum esse misericordem, ut non sit justus, sed observent quæ contra istorum hominum stultitiam, profert idem author lib. de 10. chordis, cap. 11 tom. 9. fol. (mihi) 199. (vid. loc.) recte enim Gregor. in 1. Reg. cap. 3. v. 18. fol. (mihi) 252. peccare, & de Dei creatoris clementia presumere pelagojustitia ejus exponi est, nam (inquit vir doctus) misericordia sine justitia non est misericordia, sed familiaritas. (l) Ut ostendat Deus se quodammodo inuitum cogi ad penam de populo suo exigendam, cum gentis quodam minatur, quia enim nihil ei magis proprium est quam benefacere, quoties nobis tractatur, ac si velius nos tractat certum est pravitate nostra hoc adigi, quia ejus beneficentia liberum cursum non permitimus: præsertim vero propentus est ad suos humaniter tractandos, & dum videt indulgentia sua non amplius esse locum, quævis tristitia ad puniendum accingitur. Jo. Calvin in illa 1. 14.

(m) Great is the bounteousness of his sin, that can provoke a God to so much mercy, to express much severity: that drop of gall must needs be bitter, that can imbride a sea of honey. God afflicts not willingly, he gives being naturally, but strikes not till provoked. *Job.* 34. 22. *Jehon.* in *Jud.* 2. word but only of grace review (ed of) bound branches

erth) his proper work, *Micah*, 7. 18. Hence, when he is diverted from that course, by the madness of self-destroying sinners, how doth he regrave, and express a kind of reluctancy to smite and punish his poor creatures? *Isa.* 1. 24. *Hof.* 11. 8, 9. and how pathetically doth he hold out his complacency and delight, when there is in his people such a frame and disposition as is capable of mercy, and lament, as it were, when it is wanting, *Deut.* 5. 29. *Pf.* 81. 13. *Isa.* 48. 18. *Hof.* 6. 4. &c. and shall any humble and thirsting penitent fear, while he draws nigh to this full fountain? and shall any tender-hearted suppliant doubt of the acceptance and prevalence of his prayers, with this kind and gracious God? O, ye jealous and suspicious ones! ye know not who he is, with whom ye have to do, who dare entertain such base thoughts of the infinite mercy and tender bowels of our God: Ah! what are the bowels of the most compassionate mother towards the Son of her womb? they are but a dark shadow of his love, and like a drop to the Ocean. *Tum pater noster*, &c. *Isa.* 49. 15. God (*n*) *so* loves the world, that there was none amongst the creatures, and nothing in any of them, to be found to make out the comparison: this was such a *se* (sach one) as had not a *scut*. And yet ye will confidently ask what ye stand in need of from your earthly Parents, and cannot ask from your Father in heaven without fear and doubting. Ah! let us be ashamed and humbled for our base and unworthy thoughts of that most glorious attribute of God, which he most manifesteth, and would have most magnified. Is thy desire to have, and how would it delight thee to receive? what needeth then discourage thee, while thou comest to ask from him who is more willing and ready to give, than thou to ask or receive. *He delighteth in mercy* and to do good: He is *goodness*, it self, goodness in the abstract; and the goodness of the creature scarce deserveth the name: Now it is the nature of (*v*) goodness (as Philosophers affirm) to diffuse and communicate it self. Its true, God is a free agent in the communication of his goodness, he dispenseth it according to his pleasure; but yet he is, and hath declared himself to be alwayes ready to pity and shew mercy

(o) *Joh. 3. 16.*

(o) *Borum*
officiis
mundis
diffusionis

mercy to the indigent, and that he will rejoyce over his servants to do them good, *Deut. 30. 9. Jer. 32. 41. Ps. 35. 10. &c.* O, ye of little faith! why do ye then fear, and by your unbelief obstruct your own mercies? If (saith (p) Cyprian) ye had faith to receive, he hath a hand to give without measure, above all that ye can think or ask.

Thus we have, as it were, Gods natural propension to do good to his creatures; to which, 1. we may add that morall obligation to shew mercy to his servants, with whom he hath made a Covenant; he (to whom none of the creatures could set bounds, nor oblige) hath of his own good pleasure made known to us in his promises that way of mercy, in which he will walk towards us; so that now we have the credit of heaven, and the truth and fidelity of the great King mortgaged (as it were) for our security, and shall we still fear and distrust? and by our jealousie and unbelief dishonour the high and lofty one, who hath stooped so low as to bring himself under the obligation of a (q) promise, and to confirm it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to ly, we might have strong consolation and confidence, *Heb. 6. 17. 18.* But albeit some out of weakness, and upon a mistake of their own state, may question their interest in the promise, yet that any one out of hell should be so desperately mad, as once to doubt of the truth of the promises, and of Gods fidelity and veracity, will hardly be imagined; nay, the devils themselves believe, and are convinced of the truth, both of Gods promises and threatnings, and therefore tremble, *1. Jam. 2. 19.* And there is none in hell, but as they find by their sad experience, that Gods Word against them is accomplished, so they know that there hath not (r) failed one word of all his good promises towards his servants. But amongst these (s) locusts that come from the bottomless pit, I mean the Roman Seducers, there is found one *Medina*, who dare open his mouth to utter such a mad (I cannot say (t) helish) blasphemy,

(p) *Profluens largiter spiritus nullis finibus premitur, nec coercitibus claustris intra certa maiarum patia refringitur, manas jugiter, exasperat efflucit, nostrum tantum sitias pectus, et pateat: quantum illius fidei capax afferimus, tantum gratia inundans haurimus, Cypr. lib. 1. epist. 2.*

(q) *And not one promise, but so many; and concerning not some few and small things, but whatsoever may make for our good and happiness here, and hereafter. 1. Tim. 4. 8. 2. Pet. 1. 3. and therefore the Apostle*

where had reason to admire the exceeding greatness and preciousness of the promises, τὰ μεγάλα ἡ τιμὰ ἐπαγγελμάτων. (r) 1 Kings, 9. 16. (s) Rev. 4. 8. (t) Though hell be the place of blasphemies, yet the present case and misery doth banish such a fancy from them, and

(u) Sciens ecclesiam... quod Deus potentiam suam non alligaverit scripturis, & promissis quae in scriptura continentur, quandoquidem ipse super omnia est, & tam omnipotens post promissa, ac si nihil promississet ideo ecclesia simpliciter Deum orat ut illa absoluta omnipotentia contra animas fidelium qui in gratia decesserunt utantur ideo oratur ut eas ab aeternis poenis & a vindicta iudicis condemnantis liberaretur.

(x) Alph. Mendoz. contrav. ideol. quast. 6. b. 5.
(y) A in vero qui esse non putat Deos, nefarius sit: qui tales ducit esse quales superstitiosi, nonne opinionibus tenentur magis nefariis? ego quidem de me homines predicare malui, neque omnino natum fuisse, neque esse Plutarchum, quam dicere hominem esse Plutarchum inflabilem, volucrum, &c. Atqui de Diana quam opinabatur esse Deam credunt superstitiosi similia his, & priora, &c. Plutar. Ethic. de superst. interp. Herm. Crisost. pag. (mibi) 317.

and who is not ashamed to pretend religion, and to draw an argument from Gods sovereignty, and absolute power to confirm that wicked dream: For (saith (u) he) God hath not limited and affricted his power to the Scriptures, or to the promises that are therein contained, since he is above all things, and as omnipotent after all his promises, as if he had made no promise; therefore (saith he) the Church doth humbly pray, that he would not use this absolute power and omnipotency against the souls of just men after their death, but that he would keep them from everlasting pains, and raise them up at the last day. We have spoken to this unreasonable and antiscipteural conclusion, which that author would collect from thence, and now will say no more but that this is *dignum patella operculum*, that a blasphemous conceit is a fit medium to prove an article of the antichristian faith. And we would be too prodigal of time, if we did spend much of it in confuting that strange fancy, which falleth under the present disquisition; there being none of whatsoever profession, besides that author, who will not abominat such a vile assertion; which (x) *Alphonsus Mendoz*a (though one of the Romish Clergy, and who owneth that conclusion for which it was brought by *Medina*) calls *indignum viro theologo, a tenet unworthy of him who beareth the name of a Divine*. Let us hear what the Pagan *Plutarch* saith concerning the like (yea, he instanceth this very particular) case, If (saith (y) he) they be most nefarious and abominable who deny that there is a God, yet certainly those are more nefarious and blasphemous, who entertain such erroneous and unworthy conceits of God, as *superstitious*

dreamers do christ and vns: I rather (saith he) men would think, that there is not in the world, neither ever was such a one as Plutarch, then that they would say that Plutarch is an unstable and unconstant man, who doth not stand to his word, &c. and yet such and worse apprehensions have the superstitions of their God, &c. If the pure creature cannot endure that his truth and fidelity should be questioned, what an indignity must it be to cast such an imputation upon the infinite Creator? He who will not suffer the least jot or tittle of his word to fall to the ground, *Mat. 5. 17, 18.* and who (as we heard from *Psa. 138. 2.*) hath magnified his truth above all his name, will certainly be avenged on such who dare rob him of that glory; and if (x) this foundation fail, well may we ask, *What can the righteous do?* what is his hope and where shall he ground his confidence? We will say no more now for confuting that intolerable blasphemy, but shall remit the reader to (a) *Calvins* full Commentary on *1 Job. 5. 10.* he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, and can any make him worse?

O! but will the doubting believer say, If I should suffer such a blasphemous thought once to enter into my heart, I were deservedly accursed; if I *discredit* but a vain, lying deceitfull man like my self, he will think himself *dishonoured*, and should I deal thus with him for whom it is impossible to lie? I know that God is true; though all men be liars and may deceive or be deceived, I know that God will make his word good, and faithfully perform all his promises to whom they belong: but, alas! I fear lest I be not among that number, and that I have no interest in the promises: though God cannot deceive, yet I may be deceived in apply-

(x) *Psa. 11. 3.*
(a) *Impios ex-
trema bla-
phemia facit,
quod Deum
mendacii ar-
guant: cer-
te Deo nihil pre-
tiosius est, quam
sua veritas: i
quare nulla il-
li atrocior in-
juria fieri po-
test, quam
dum hoc hono-
re spoliatur;
ergo ut nos ad
credendum
incitet argu-
mentum a con-
trario sumit;
nam si Deum
facere menda-*

cem, horribilis est & execranda impietas, quia tunc quod illi maxime proprium est eripi-
tur: quis non horreat fidem Evangelio derogare, in quo Deus unice verax & fidelis vult
haberi? hoc diligenter notandum est; mirantur aliqui cur taxare Deum fidem commen-
do, cum tam fovere damnetur incredulitas: atqui hic vertitur summa Dei gloria, nam quum
potissimum veritatis sua spectmen in Evangelio edere volueris, nihil illi facit reliquum
quicunque oblatum illi Christum respiciunt, quare ut quemplam in reliquis vitiis paribus
deum Angelo esse parem, diabolica tamen est ejus audacia, quamvis Christum re-
llectit, &c. *Jo. Calv. in 1 Jo. 5. 10.*

ing his word without a ground and warrant; for, sh^d such is my unworthiness, &c. *Ans.* We will not now digress to examine thy title, albeit such as have no right, use not to question their right; So that thy very anxiety and fear may open some door of hope, and be some ground of confidence unto thee: and if thou didst not believe, couldst thou still thus depend on God and call upon him? and (as hath been observed) thy not knowing thy interest in the promises, will not nullifie thy interest. But now, thou who sayest thou dar'st not distrust God, but thy self and thine own state, let me ask, 1. if thy faith be as strong to the fulfilling of the promises, as to thy interest in them, and whether thou wouldst still doubt, though thou were assured that thy state were safe? and whether thou believest that all the prayers of those who are Saints indeed are heard, and meet with a return, and that God doth alwayes accomplish the many and large promises he hath made to prayer? Thou canst not thus (which is too ordinary) doubt, but thou must call Gods fidelity in question; however, thou mayest think or profess that thou dost only doubt of thine own condition. 2. Supposing thou art at a point, as to thy state and condition, I would ask whether thou art as confident to receive the very particular in kind which thou didst petition, as thou art confident of the goodness and conveniency of it for thee? If thou dost more doubt as to the first, then as to the second, thy doubting must flow from thy distrusting Gods goodness, care and fidelity; and thou canst not say, that while thou comest before the Lord to present thy supplications to him, thou didst believe that he would do that which was best for thee in such a particular. 3. I would enquire, whether notwithstanding thy doubting either concerning thy state or the success of thy prayers, yet still thou hingest and dependest upon God, saying, with him, *Job. 13. 15. Though he should slay me, yet will I trust in him, and call upon him as long as I live;* and if it be thus with thee, thou mayest confidently lay hold on that word, *Isa. 26. 3. (though thou walk in darkness and hast no light, yet if fearing the Lord and obeying his voice, thou trust in him as thou art allowed,*

Isa. 50. 10.) thou hast his word, that he will keep thee in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on him, because thou trustest in him: Nay, when arguments drawn from sense and sight do fail, yet thou mayest plead and argue from thy trusting and dependance upon him, and improve that topick in thy prayer, with *Asa*, 2 *Chron.* 14. 11. and *David*, *Psa.* 7. 1. *Psa.* 25. 2. 20. *Psa.* 57. 1. *Psa.* 71. 5. *Psa.* 86. 2. &c. Indeed, if thou didst not depend and rely on Christ, and if thou didst not obey that command, 1 *Job.* 3. 23. thou couldst not escape that curse sealed with an oath, *Heb.* 3. 18. For, as *(b)* Calvin saith, though we were unblamable in our whole conversation, yet, if we do not believe in Christ, all this were but a devilish holiness and could not profit us; while thou standest at a distance from Christ, thou rejectest all the promises, which only in him are *yes* and *amen*. And, O! what *(c)* folly thus to cast away and to despise thine own mercies: but if thou close with, and still hing upon him, though thou hast weak eyes and canst not see and discern the grips and hold thou hast laid on him, yet he will not cast thee off nor suffer thee to fall. But, whatever be our ignorance, weakness or mistake, the Lord hath bountifull y given to us his truth and veracity, as a sure and immovable ground of confidence; he being as unchangeable in his word, as in his being; he can no more falsifie his word and break promise, then leave off to be: what place then is there left for doubting, while we have not one, but so many full and clear promises, that God will hear and answer our prayers? the promise of audience (saith the judicious Mr. *(d)* Gerhard) is more then an hundred times repeated. If a man of credit once speak the word, thou wilt rest on it, and yet darst doubt after the God of truth hath spoken once and again; and mayest thou not fear, lest he who hath magnified his truth above all his name, will magnifie his justice in being avenged on thee, for this dishonour done to his name?

(b) Calvin, *loc jam cit.*

(c) Nullum genus iniquitatis in infidelitate (ut sic loquar) insipientius, Beati de confid.

(d) Cuius fiducia fulcrum principale, et veracissimi, et omnipotentis Dei promissio de exauditione per totius in scripturis repetita, *Psa.* 50. 15. *Mat.* 65. 24. *Mat.* 7. 7. *Mat.* 18. 19. *Luc.* 11. 9. *Jo.* 14. 13. *Jo.* 16. 23.

Jac. 1. 4. 1 *Jo.* 3. 22. *Eccl.* 14. 19. &c. Hanc promissionem quam Christus iuramento confirmavit, quamque Spiritus sanctus in corde vestro interiori copulavit, fides debet suis oculis intueri, etque firmis et iunctis, ut verum de omni deorum precibus salutem certum sit, Gerhard Harm. evang. cap. 149.

Of faith in prayer, &c.

3. The infinit power and omnipotent arm of God; we ask from him who can do exceeding abundantly above all we can think or ask, *Eph. 3. 20.* The poor creature may be kind, willing and ready to help, but it is weak and unable; but as our God is incomparably more kind, tender and affectionat, So nothing is hard difficult or impossible to him, *Mat. 19. 26. Mark 10. 27. Luke 1. 37.* Prayer layeth

(e) Jenkin on Jude, v. 20.

(f) Cant, 6.

4.

(g) Est quaedam presum omnipotencia.

(h) Oratio longius vulnerat quam sagitta.

(i) Ineffabilem, supernaturalem, super artificialem, super omne ingenium hominum, super damnum astutiarum & facul-tatem — Fi-dei & oratio potestatem at-que virtutem efficacia à Do-mino acco-po-runt, ut ea credamur esse facta per si-dem, quæ nullis alijs argu-mentis fieri potuissent, at-que illa orationi concessa, quæ omnibus alijs uno denegata deus, oblati-que muneribus, at-que nullo humanæ dignitatis non potesta, Simon de Cassia, lib. 9. de gest. Christi cap. 49.

Oratio est orandi prædium, adversario incendium, Angelis solatium, Deo gratiarum sacrificium, Aug. apud Archidiaconum, deo. dist. 96. fol. 105. col. 3.

hold on Gods omnipotency, and engageth it in our quarrel: Hence (saith (e) one) *there is a shadow of omnipotency in prayer*; and are not praying Saints strong, and to persecuting enemies (f) terrible, as an army with banners? one praying *Elijah*, was (in the estimation of him who had learned of God to judge aright, and give to things their right name) *the Chariots and Horse-men of Israel*, 2 King, 2. 12. and wicked King *Jeash* had so much light and conviction as to acknowledge the (g) same of his successor *Elisha*, 2 King, 13. 14. Ah! who knows the power and efficacy of fervent prayer? *Jam. 5. 16. Faith and prayer* (saith (i) one) *have obtained from God a supernatural and ineffable power, over and against all the policy and might of devils and men; So that those things have been done by faith and given in return to prayer, that no wisdom, gift, dignity, excellency or strength could effectuate.* See *Heb. 11.*

You will say, nay, but the Lord works no wonders now, and my case is so desperate, that less will not do the turn. *Ans.* Albeit now a dayes we have no warrant to ask or expect miracles, yet his hand is not shortened; and albeit the doctrine of faith be sufficiently confirmed by the miracles wrought by the Prophets and Apostles, and though there be no extraordinary calling of men, requiring extraordinary dispensations to evidence that it is of God; yet, if Gods glory and his peoples good did as much call for miracles now as in former times, these should not be wanting; the Lord

que illa orationi concessa, quæ omnibus alijs uno denegata deus, oblati-que muneribus, at-que nullo humanæ dignitatis non potesta, Simon de Cassia, lib. 9. de gest. Christi cap. 49. Oratio est orandi prædium, adversario incendium, Angelis solatium, Deo gratiarum sacrificium, Aug. apud Archidiaconum, deo. dist. 96. fol. 105. col. 3.

is still what once he was, *wonderfull in counsel and excellent in working*, Isa. 28. 29. And albeit the popish *Legends* of their *Saints* miracles be apocryphall, and in many things ridiculous, yet there was scarce one age, since the dayes of Christ, that cannot furnish authentick evidences of the wonderfull works of God toward his children: Nay, the Lord can, by an extraordinary (though strange and astonishing to us) providence; bring to pass whatever can make for our good and happiness. Our extremitie cannot be so great, that it may not be a fit opportunity for him to work; there is no case so desperat in which he cannot help, and far beyond our expectation *provide means* when the creature can see none, and *bless such means* as are at hand, though few and weak; and thus by an ordinary providence, work great and admirable things for the deliverance, comfort and happiness of his *Saints*; thy wound cannot be so deep, but his balm can cure it, nor thy disease and malady so great, but he hath a remedy at hand: and do not say, O I if I had been living in former dayes, when the Lord wrought miracles for his people; thou art unworthy of this *Gospel-light*; who wouldst once lay it in the ballance with those works of providence, which also were wrought for thee, and which thou (to whose hands an authentick Register of them is sent) oughtest to improve as thy talents. And as to thy present case and trial, neither thus art thou at a loss: for, 1. the goodness and mercy, the love and tender bowels of the Father, is the same. 2. His word and promises; his truth and fidelity are unchangeable. 3. The blood of Christ and his purchase, and so the title and right of his servants is the same, yesterday, to day and for ever; yea we, for our further comfort, have his intercession super-added. 4. The help of the Spirit to direct and instruct, to assist and strengthen, to witness, seal, comfort, &c. is now rather more then less. Since all things stand as formerly (and any alteration being additional and for the better to us) our interest in God and in the blood of his Son, our right to the Promises; and to the Covenant the same, why may not our expectation and confidence be as great and strong; and Gods care and providence as sweet and comfortable as in former days.

dayes of old? especially since our need, straits and difficulties may be greater, and Gods glory no less concerned therein, then at any time formerly; since all things thus stand alike, shall not the *events* be the same? Though there may be some change in outward dispensations, and in the manner of working, yet the work and effect may be the same, as effectual and seasonable, as sweet and comfortable to us, and as unexpected, astonishing and admirable to enemies; and why then may not we, as well as Gods people and servants of old, lay hold on his omnipotency and infinit power for our stay and comfort?

4. Consider that title and name the word of truth giveth unto the Lord, he is the *hearer of prayer*, Pl. 65. 2. he is plenteous in mercy to all, that call upon him, Ps. 86. 1. he will fulfill the desire of those that fear him, and hear their cry, Ps. 145. 19. And may we not have this confidence in him, that he will hear us whensoever we call? and may we not know that he will answer our desires, 1 Joh. 3. 14. 15. &c. It is reported to the commendation of some States and Princes, that they never rejected any Petitioner; the Senators of old Rome did (1). judge it a great disgrace to the Roman state, that any man should have occasion to say, *that he had in vain asked help at their hands.* It doth not become the Emperor (said (m)) the noble and magnanimous Titus Vespasian to send any supplicants sad from him. Ah! shall the poor creature have such large bowels, and shall not the infinit Creator, the (n) Father of mercies and God of all comfort, pity all his honest supplicants? Shall it be belowe a generous Prince to send away any of his subjects sad from his presence, and shall not the King of Saints regard the prayer of his destitute ones, and hearken to their complaint? Ps. 102. 17. Such as never went to school, and know not how to frame an argument according to art, may without hesitation, from this encouraging principle (with the Prophet, Ps. 65. 2.) draw that sweet conclusion, *therefore unto thee shall all flesh come*, and may (if the fault be not in themselves) with confidence present their supplications unto thee. And who would faint in that exercise, that cannot want success? O! let us

consider

(1) Rob.
Cawdray
vreal. of si-
mil. pag. 548.
(m)---No
quem sine pu
dimiserat no-
gans oportere
quenquam a
sermone prin-
cipis tristitia
discedere Clu-
ver. Hist. epis-
in Tito.
Vespos. pag.
(mihi) 189.
(n) 1 Cor.
13.

consider the parable, *Luk. 18. 1.* with the several encouraging dissimilitudes, and let us no more doubt of Gods readiness to hear and answer our requests: particularly let us ponder how it was a burden to that cruel Judge, who neither regarded God nor man, to be petitioned; but the prayers of the Saints are Gods delight, *Prov. 15. 8.* they ascend up before him as incense, as an odour of a sweet smell, and a sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to him, *Pf. 141. 2.* *Revel. 8. 3. 4.* The voice of his petitioners is sweet, and as musick in his ears, *Gen. 2. 14.* *Rev. 8. 8.* Ah! why shouldst thou weary in speaking; since he doth not weary in hearing? what I thought the vision tarry, yet wait for it, because it will surely come; it will not tarry. What strange language is this, though it tarry, it shall not tarry? But there is no contradiction; though as to our sense and apprehension it tarry, and for a long time; yet it shall not tarry one moment longer, than the fit and appointed time. The Lord waits, that he may be gracious unto us, and do us good; that we may be fit to receive, and improve every mercy atight, and that it may be a mercy and blessing indeed, *Isa. 30. 18.* And will we not suffer him to time our mercies so, that they may do us good? and if once the fit season were come, while his servants are yet speaking, he will hear us, and answer before they speak, *Isa. 65. 24.* *Pf. 32. 5.* Many a time hath our suit been dispatched, before we have presented it; the Lord in his providence hath met us in our way to the throne, and filled our mouth with songs of praise, instead of prayers and complaints; and hath given us not only what we would ask and desire, but *(c)* abundantly more; the Lord can do unto us, and for us, above what we can think or ask; and who dare limit, or set bounds to his Majesty? *Job. 42. 2.* If we consider what persons and prayers have met with success, it will seem very unreasonable once to doubt of the prevalency of the fervent prayer of the righteous. For persons, we may for our encouragement call to mind, that the eyes of all things wait upon him, and that according to his gift he shall give them their meat in due season, when he beareth the

(c) Thus to Solomon asking only wisdom, the Lord did give riches and honour in great abundance, *1 Kings. 3. 9. 13.* and to Hannah, asking one Son, *1 Sam. 1. 11.* the Lord did give her two Sons and two Daughters more, *Ch. 2. 21.* to Jacob asking only food and raiment, *Gen. 28. 10.* he gave two hands and compasses, *Gen. 31. 10.* the

the morning of brute beasts, unsatisfieth the very natural and sensitive desire of every living thing, *Pf.* 145. 15, 16. &c. Hence, we may well argue with our blessed Master, if God thus feed the Ravens, and cloath and arrey the lillies and grass of the field; if he thus care for brutes, and satisfy the natural inclination and desire of these inferior creatures, will he not far rather hear the cry, and answer the desire of his own children? *Luk.* 12. 24, 27, 28. *1 Cor.* 9. 9. *Mat.* 23. 34. as the Lord thus heareth the natural and sensitive voice of brutes; so also out of his generall bounty, he pitieth brutish sensual men, and often answereth them in the day of their trouble and extremity; thus he hearkened to the voice of *Hagar* and *Ishmael*, *Gen.* 21. 17. of *Roboam*, *2 Chr.* 12. 7. of *Isaiah*, *2 King.* 13. 4. of *Ahab*, *1 King.* 21. 29. of (formerly vile, though then repenting) *Manasseh*, *2 Chr.* 33. 13. of heart-broken *Ninivah*, *Jonah*, 3. 10. of Pagan *Marriners*, *Jer.* 107. 28. of the proud tyrant *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* 34. of dissembling and hypocritical Professors, *Pf.* 78. 34, 38. &c. Thus the Lord would testify that high account he hath of the fervent prayer of his honest supplicants, in regarding the very picture and shadow of that ordinance so far, as to remunerat the same with the benefit of a common providence; which will be yet more apparent, if we remember what kind of prayers have not only met with a (p) bountifull return, but also have been graciously accepted, and benev obtained a blessing indeed; yea, and not only when there hath been much weakness in the performance; but also some presents distemper in the supplicant; thus he answered the desire of quarrelling *Moses*, *Exod.* 6. v. *Exod.* 32. 23; of passionate *Jonah*, *Jon.* 2. 10, 7. of *David* changing his behaviour, as if he had been mad, *Pf.* 34. 4. of *Abraham* denying his wife, and exposing her to so great a temptation, &c. And then for infirmities and weakness, as to the work it self; did not the Lord hearken to *Hearshah* his chattering like a Crane, and mourning like a Dove, *Isa.* 38. 5, 14. as the Psalmist his crying and broken language, when his spirit was so overwhelmed that he could not speak, *Pf.* 77. 10. to the pious godly, *Pf.* 102. 1. to the sighs of the

yet, these words were spce. Saine (though never so mean and
 weak) who hath observed the works of God, and the sever-
 al signs of providence towards himself, but will put to his
 feet to this gruch, that the Lord is the hearer of prayers,
 and such as converse with the godly, will hear them from
 time to time admire Gods bonaty and care for them, and to
 proclaim his fidelity in answering their prayers, though mix-
 ed with much weakness and dross, and though sometimes
 through ignorance and impatience, they have (with Zion
 Isa. 40. 1. 4.) complained that God had forgotten them, yet
 ere long they became sensible of their mistake, and have been
 forced to confesse and bewail their folly and unbelief, and to
 say (as there ver. 15. 16.) that though a tender mother
 could forget her sucking child, yet the Lord could not forget
 his people, they being graven upon the palms of his hands.
 As we have the word of him who is truth it self, and cannot
 lie, that he will always hear, and give a gracious return to
 all the prayers of his honest supplicants, which is the founda-
 tion of faith, so every Saine hath his own experiences, which
 spiritualized sense and feeling may lay hold upon; and is then
 has something wanting for thy comfort and establishment;
 is there yet any of the sons of Zion who dare doubt of the
 fathers love and care of their Father, and (which is worse)
 who dare give God the lie? he may summond all his crea-
 tures, and ask them, is it, if there be any among them who
 can bear witness against his Word. O! what an im-
 pudent and blasphemous lie were it, to say, that God had not
 kept promise? and yet this atheism looketh in the hearts
 of too many; yes, and so much of unbelief as lodgeth in the
 heart, so much also of this venom, which the old serpent did
 first put out upon our first parents, and which they too
 greedily sucked in; but after that we have cast out all that
 poison, and are perfectly purged; after that our cynar
 is broken, and all mists of darkness are dispelled; we will
 doubt no more, and complain no more; after we are once
 entered in the light of glory, we will then clearly see our
 errours and mistakes, and will proclaim to all eternity the
 Lords faithfulness in fulfilling all his promises, and his

kindness and kindness towards us, in not granting our foolish and sinful requests: why, what did even hear a Sinner, on his death-bed (when scarce blind and worldly temptations could promise sleep, and furnish no entertainment, and thus were not able to be abused, infatuated and bewitch, as formerly) who (I say) was the man, that crouching upon the borders of eternity, durst challenge the Almighty for not accomplishing his promises: or who could say, like as sometime he had called upon God in vain: All things can give their evidences, and all believers will, and must sooner or at length confess, that there was never a prayer put up in faith, that proved abortive; though all our labours and endeavours under the Sun, may be fruitless and to no purpose, yet prayer will never be as a (1) miscarrying womb and dry breasts, but always proveth that good seed, which (though it may for a while lie hid under ground, yet) still yields good fruit, for the comfort and satisfaction of the sower. What is (2) said of the bow of *Jonathan* and the sword of *Saul*, is a fit motto of the prayer of faith: *is never returneth empty*. And this truth will not be called in question by any, except when flesh and carnal reason (these corrupt judges in the matters of God) do sit on the bench; and give out sentences: But ah! our unbelief, negligence and estrangedness from God, doth deprive our selves and the Church, of many mercies, and of much matter of comfort to our selves, of praise to God, and honour and astonishment to enemies.

7. If we consider the many, sweet and binding relations, which the Lord hath been pleased to undertake towards his covenanted people, who are true Israelites, and are sincere in their profession; if we consider how all the persons of the blessed Trinity are affected towards them; what is the love of the Father, the purchase of the Son, and the work of the holy Ghost, our doubting and unbelief will be most unreasonable: 1. there is our God our Maker, our Lord and Master, our Father and Husband, &c. And will not the infinite Creator care for his creatures, who depend upon him? will not the great Lord and Master of heaven and earth, mercy and provide for his household? will not the Father of the fatherless

(a) *Quem enim invocamus? Patrem, Fratrem, Advocatum, Quamvis? Patre jubente, Fratrem iustitiae, Advocato impellente, Quasi fiducia? Patre promittente, Fratrem adiuvante, Advocato testificante. Quid preciamur? hereditatem quam nobis impetravit Frater noster? Pater, obsequium spiritus sanctus, Gerhar. barn. Kuang, cap. 149.*

(1) *By a most emphatic asseveration (which is many of the learned apprehend to be an oath) as Joh. 16, 23, &c.*

pray his children in the day of their trouble, and here shall cry? will not the Husband hearken to the voice of the Spouse, and grant her desire? *Ch. 2.* As to the relations under which we stand towards the persons of the blessed Trinity severally; is not the (1) Father our father, the Son our brother and advocat; and the holy Ghost our helper leader and guide? and who will doubt of acceptance, welcome and success while his father commandeth, his brother inviteth, and his guide and counsellor persuadeth, and allureth him to come and present his requests? while the father promisseth; the elder brother and heir reneweth and (2) confirmeth his fathers grant; our leader and assistant doth put that security in our hand, and is willing to engage with them in the same bond, and putteth to his seal and subscription, confirming their evidence, and adding his own; what place is there left for unbelief, doubting and fears? Especially if, 3. we consider, 1. the Fathers love; that mysterious love, in giving his only begotten Son to death, that we might live, *Joh. 3. 16. 1 Joh. 4. 9.* and shall we think, that he who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us, will not freely with him also give us what we shall ask in his name? *Rom. 8. 32. I say not (saith the Son) that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you, Joh. 16. 26, 27.* I would not have you think, that you have no other ground whereon to build your faith, but my intercession, I will not pray for you to one who knoweth you not, and hath no respect to you, I will not pray for you, as if ye were enemies and strangers, neither should ye thus pray for your selves after that ye are reconciled to him, through my blood; after ye are become children, and mutually love, and are loved of the Father and me; Courtiers will confidently draw nigh to their Prince; and we have moyn in heaven; the King himself loveth us, and hath adopted us, to the crown; and will he withhold lesser mercies, and hide his face while we present our requests to him? But as the Father doth thus love us, and freely give, and by covenant dispose to us all that we can desire, or stand in need of; *So, 2. the Son hath laid out a price for us, and by his blood hath purchased*

chased

chased all these things to us ; and *ever liveth to make inter-
 cession for us*, and to apply to us the merit of his death, and
 to put us in possession of all these good things which are the
 purchase of his blood ; ah ! we seldom visit the throne, yet
 Christ is alwayes there ; we weary in praying for our selves ,
 but Christ wearieeth not to pray for us ; our prayers are cold
 and without life ; but Christ doth not faint, nor grow remiss ;
 our manifold iniquities do cry against us, but the blood of
 Christ doth out-cry them : And since we come not in our
 own name, but in his, and ask not for our own worth & good-
 ness, but for his sake who hath paid our debt and purchased
 our peace and acceptance through his own blood, and who
 doth concur with us in our supplications, why should we
 fear ? the Father alwayes heareth him, *Joh. 11. 42.* and
 therefore must also hear us, with whom he alwayes joyneth ;
 the Father cannot reject us and our prayers, unless he
 also hide his face from the Son of his love ; which since he
 will not, and cannot do, we may rest confident and secure :
 but as the Father hath promised and freely disposed, and the
 Son purchased all the good things we can ask, So, 3. the
 holy Ghost doth enable, fit and prepare us, both to ask and
 receive, he draweth, and helpeth weak ones to ascend to the
 throne, and putteth words in their mouth, and teacheth
 them what to say, *Rom. 8. 26, 27. Joh. 14. 16, 17.* And
 will the Lord reject those prayers that are breathed into us
 by his Spirit ? but as the Spirit doth thus help us to pray, so
 to pray in faith ; as he helpeth our infirmities, by enlarging
 the heart, and filling it with spiritual affections, so also by
 working in us a child-like confidence, and making us cry (not
 only with the mouth, which were no great matter, but with
 the heart, having made an impression and sense of it there)
Abba Father, *Rom. 8. 16.* As he leadeth the Saints into all
 truth, and putteth to his seal to the whole Word of God,
Joh. 16. 13. Joh. 14. 26. so particularly to the promises
 concerning the success of their prayers, that if they knock it
 shall be opened, if they seek they shall find, &c. Oh !
 what a blasphemy were it once to imagine that God could
 lie, and would not perform these promises ? or that the
 Spirit

Spirit of truth would put to his seal to an untruth?

The Lord pity and pardon our unbelief, that having to do with such a compassionate and condescending Lord, who hath stooped so low, and come so nigh to us, who hath held forth himself to us under the nearest, most amiable and engaging relations, and who hath taken upon him so many bonds to do us good; we, notwithstanding will yet doubt of his good will, and of his faithfulness in performing his promises: Oh! 1. what a dishonour do we offer to our kind Master thus to question his love, care and fidelity? 2. what a shame to our holy profession? 3. what a base return do we make for the many mercies we still receive? and, 4. what loss and damage do we bring to our selves? we expect little, and receive little; we will not trust God, and he will not satisfy our desires, *Jam. 1. 6, 7.*

Are ye now convinced of your folly and guiltiness, in thus distrusting the Lord? and is it the desire of your soul to have this evil cured? O! then, 1. ponder frequently and seriously these and such like considerations; if this were the matter of your daily meditation, if these things did sink down into your hearts, and did abide upon your spirits, they might prove a notable preservative against your unbelief, doubtings and jealousies. 2. Let us exercise our selves in the Scriptures; especially laying hold on such promises, as are most pertinent and suitable to our condition; faith must have a word of promise whereon it must rest, and the more express and particular that it be, our faith will proportionably cleave to it the more firmly; O! but what atheism must there lodge in that heart, that dare doubt where it hath this warrant, *thus saith the Lord?* 3. Labour to know more of God, his love, mercy, power, fidelity, &c. Ignorance of God, his nature and attributes, is the mother of jealousy and infidelity, but *they who know his name, will put their trust in him*, *Ps. 9. 10.* With what zeal and success did *Moses* plead from Gods attributes? *Numb. 14. 17, 18, 19.* 4. Since sensible demonstrations are so concludent, and prevail so much with us, who live too much upon sensible objects; let us observe and keep a register of the gracious returns

returns from time to time made to the prayers of Gods people and honest servants. 1. Our own experiences would be kept on record; he who can say with *David*, the Lord hath delivered me out of the paw of the Lyon and of the Bear, will be able the more confidently to say, with him, *the Lord will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine*, 1 Sam. 17-37.

experience begetteth confidence. But, 2. we should also observe the dispensations of providence towards others: 14

the Saints experiences are recorded in Scripture for our instruction, comfort and encouragement, *Rom.* 15. 4. If God regard the prayer of the desolate, this must be written for the generations to come, *Psa.* 102. 17, 18. the success that others have met with will encourage us to follow the like course.

5. Let us be exact and circumspect in our walk; if our conscience condemn us we will fear the Judge; every blot in our life doth darken and obscure the promise, and dazzle the eye of faith; when the Saints fall, their faith doth shake; guiltiness is the mother of jealousy; when we do ill we become suspicious, and are ready to question his love and kindness to us, when we prove ungrate and come short of our duty to him. O! but if we would believe without staggering, let us not halt in our walking, let us be conscientiously diligent in every point of duty, and (2.) *bold in all manner of conversation*, if we would plead the promise and ask in (a) *faith, nothing wavering.*

(2.) 1 Pet. 1.

(a) Jam. 1. 6.

(b) Herod having given to his ten Antipater his Authority (as he speaketh) his favour, his secrets, his heart and crown in a will signed with his hand, yet that unnatural monster could not stay a little till his fathers death, but laboured by all means to prevent na-

ture, particularly by seducing and persuading Pheloras to poison the King; yet having the boldness to offer to kiss his father (after he was informed of his

Hence, for trial, this will be a good negative mark, whereby we may know who cannot pray in faith; if we do not walk as children, we cannot call God *Father*, nor with confidence expect that he will hear us: What son will not be afraid and ashamed to look his father in the face after he hath dishonoured him? and how will he blush to mention that relation, and to call him Father to whom he hath not paid the debt of love, reverence and obedience? And if any perfidious and rebellious son should be so impudent as, with (b)

conspiracy, though the writer knew not that his conspiracy was discovered, met with this terrible refusal, Avast thou murderer of brethren and father; the kiss of a father was not instituted for thee. Behold *Quintillus* thy Judge, &c. *Nich. Gausin*, holy court, part. 1. lib. 4. pag. 133.

(c) Every
reigning sin is
treason and
rebellion
against the
great King;
and interpre-
tatively Dei-
cide; and Regi-
cide; and eve-
ry sinner doth
comply and
conspire with
Sathan, and
take up arms
for him against
his Master and
Lord.

Antipater, to offer to salute and kiss his father, he might expect such a welcome and reward as he met with from the hand of *Herod*, and to find the severity of a Judge in stead of the love a Father; and yet, are there not multitudes? Ah! how many are there, who have the boldness to deal thus with the father of Spirits? Who, *Judas*-like, with a (c) treacherous heart, dare offer to kiss him, in whom they live, move and have their being, who is their Father by creation, and who offereth unto them and entreateth them to accept of the inheritance of children? Such think themselves to be sons and dare call him father, though they have the heart of an enemy; such have a kind of faith, confidence and hope, which is nothing but presumption, delusion, and groundless imagination, suggested by the father of lies, and maintained and cherished by their own foolish and deceitful hearts. This their faith is not built upon the word, it hath not for its warrant, [thus saith the Lord,] but only, [thus saith the murderer and great impostor; thus saith the deceiver and our deceitful and deceived hearts.] It doth not arise from the *Promises*, (as having no foundation there) but only from some principles of *Sathans Catechism*, which he carefully instilleth into the ears and minds of his disciples; and among the many articles of that anti-scriptural and cursed *Creed*, this (to our purpose) is one, [If we have some form of devotion, and now and then speak some few words prayer-ways, it's no matter how we live; our prayers will make amends for all; God is merciful, and therefore (will Sathan say, and they upon his word think) he will pity his poor creatures and servants, and hear them whensoever they cry to him: nay, such will be ready to apprehend, that it were cruelty and injustice to reject such well-meaning supplicants.] We may not now confute that soul-destroying delusion; but what the Apostle said of *doubting*, *1. Tim. 1. 7.* may far rather be applied to this mad and desperate presumption and confidence, *Let not such secure, bold wretches think, that they shall receive any thing of the Lord;* though too many be ready to think they shall receive, yet, saith the Apostle, let them not think so; or if they do, they will but deceive their

own souls; and whatever, for the present, may be the dispensations of a common providence, yet, ere it be long, they shall know and be convinced, that they received nothing in mercy and in return to their prayers, and nothing from the Lord, as their God and Redeemer: he was better acquainted with the mind of God, and did not mistake, who said, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*, Psa. 66. 18. And it was an acknowledged principle, that he who was born blind urged against the Jews in his apology for Christ, *Job. 9. 31*. For, saith he, we (d) know, *that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of him and doth his will, him he heareth*: Neither would the Saints themselves think they were not concerned in this caveat; for, albeit the Lord will pity them in the day of their trouble and hear their prayers, yet, if they step aside from the approved path, the Lord will hide his face; hence the Psalmist having asserted Gods care of his Saints and People, and that *he would speak peace to such*; yet, he addeth a necessary caution and warning, *but let them not turn again so folly*; as if it had been said [though they were Gods people, his Saints and precious ones, who have prayed and wait for an answer, yea, though they have asked in faith and have met with access and acceptance, so that a message of peace is dispatched, and is (as it were) on the way towards them in return to their prayers; yet, if they should, through their folly, turn aside from God, and in that interim commit some known sin, he would recall (as it were) his former grant and draw back his hand, and would not speak peace to them who had made peace with sin.]

Now come we to some positive evidences and marks of the prayer of faith: And, 1. when the affections are much enlarged, when we meet with a gale from heaven filling the sails, we may, and usually do, expect that voyage will prove successfull; when God openeth the heart, and filleth the mouth with more then ordinary boldness, fervency and liberty, we readily will apprehend, that he purposeth to fill our hands and will not send us away empty, according to that word, *Psa. 81. 10. Open thy mouth wide*, (but (e) who is sufficient for such a work, unless the Lord put to his hand?)

(d) Let bold sinners consider how gross their delusion must be, who, contrary to this known truth, dare presume and draw nigh in any ordinance without fear.

(e) Only he who is said to open the ears, Psa. 40. 6. Isa. 50. 5. to open the eyes, Psa. 146. 8. and to open the heart, (whose messenger and interpreter the lips are) Act. 16. 14. He only can open the mouth to ask aright, he only can open it wide, both extensively and intensively, and make us desire and ask great things: greatly grandia granditer, ut loquitur Augustinus loc. cit.

hand?) *and I will fill it;* We may believe he will fill that mouth with songs of praise for his gracious answers, which he hath opened so wide in fervent and importunate prayers; when we have spiritual boldness in pleading with God: we will also have confidence as to the success; and therefore these are joyned together and both ascribed to faith, *Eph. 3. 12. We have boldness, and access with confidence, through faith.* If the Lord lift up the soul to him, if he quicken and inflame the affections with a more then ordinary ardor and zeal, we will not readily doubt of our acceptance; when fire from heaven thus falleth upon our sacrifice, we will be very confident: thus, *Psa. 27. we have both Davids fervency and confidence, One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, &c. v. 4.* this was his importunity; but then his faith did act strongly and vigorously, *v. 1. 3. 5. 6.* I grant our lusts may add wings to our desires, and be as oyl to the wheels, and make us very diligent in our pursuit: there may be a natural and carnal fervency and importunity, which will rather add to our fears, then make us in faith rest upon Gods word, love and care; but the difference may easily appear, (though we will not now prosecute it) because that holy zeal and importunity is, 1. spiritual, as to the motives and end; 2. humble, and joyned with much self-emptiness and denial; 3. tender of Gods glory and honour; and, 4. submissive to his will, whereas the natural importunity is, 1. carnal; 2. proud and selfist; 3. careless of Gods glory and interest, if it might be satisfied; and, 4. impatient, under a frustration and disappointment. O! let us labour to curb our lusts, and beat down this their impetuosity and importunity; but, let us cherish and maintain that holy and spiritual importunity, which is so acceptable and prevalent with God and profitable to us: and if we would pray more confidently, let us pray more fervently and importunately; when we are cold and formal in prayer, we cannot be very confident of success, as knowing a lazy and careless way of asking to be a kind of invitation to deny, *qui timide rogat desce, negat.* Yes, the heathens, though they thought much babling acceptable to God, *Mas. 6. 7;* yet, in their sacrifices,

they had a shadow that might have served for comforting that folly; for, (f) they would not presume to sacrifice without fire, and if the fire had gone out, they looked upon that as a sign that Gods worship was neglected, and as a sad omen and presage to him for whom the sacrifice was offered.

(f) Neque enim sine igne ullum sacrificium fieri licebat—Sed autem mortuo carbone sacrificetur, signum neglectæ religionis fore, & perniciosum nemo dubitavit, Alex. ab Alexandro, genal. dier, lib. 4. cap. 17.

2. If frequency in praying be added to fervency, as it may be a further ground, So another evidence and mark of confidence; without faith we would soon weary, *I believed, therefore have I spoken*, Psa. 116. 10. But will believing *David* faint and leave off, having once spoken? Nay, faith he, but I will continue instant in this exercise, and my faith being strengthened by renewed mercies, given in return to former prayers, *I will call upon him as long as I live*, v. 2. As in handy-trades, men would soon weary in following them, if no gain were reaped or expected; So the Saints would too quickly faint in trading with heaven, if they did not see their reward: and therefore, when we continue instant in prayer, when we constantly follow that course, and not superficially and perfunctoriously, but seriously and with the whole heart, our faith must be acting, and there must be some confidence that our labour shall not be lost. But there be two cases in which, after a sigal maner, this restless importunity, diligence, frequency and continuing instant in prayer, doth evidence our faith and expectation. 1. When we meet with long and continued delays, if notwithstanding we continue and still renew our supplications; thus *David*, under his long-continued persecution by the hand of *Saul*, continued all the while busie at the throne, he would not run away from God because he seemed to hide his face, but rather maketh that sad dispensation an occasion to draw nigh to God, and turneth it in matter of complaint (not of, but) to God: as Psa. 13. 1. *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord?* But, if we ask, what kept *David* all this time from fainting? *I have* (saith he) *trusted in thy mercy*: his faith kept his head above the waters and sent him often to the throne. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, Prov. 13. 12. but when all other remedies prove ineffectual, faith will cure that dis-

case. 5. When we not only meet with delays, but also many discouragements and contrary blasts in our face, to make us streck sail and give over; if we notwithstanding still follow our duty, and continue to wrestle with God in his Ordinances while he thus seemeth to fight against us by his providence, we must have our loins girt and our spiritual armour on, and above all, we must make use of the shield of faith in this great conflict; thus, while Christ seemed not only to slight the woman of *Canaan*, and not take notice of her or her request, but also to reproach her as a dog; yet, she continues to enforce, renew and pursue her suit, she being (according to Christ's testimony of her) a woman of great faith, *Mat. 15. 28.* Thus also blind *Bartimeus*, when checked and charged to hold his peace, cryeth the more a great deal, and will not be put off till he get an answer from Christ himself, because he *believed*; hence our blessed Lord ascribeth the whole work to his faith, *Mark. 10. 52.* If faith be strong, it will set it self against all discouragements, and, like an impetuous river, will overflow and carry down all ramparts and bulwarks that stand in its way; and therefore, *if we faint in the day of adversity, our strength must be small*, *Prov. 24. 10.* But, let none imagine, that while we say that the believing soul will not be beaten from the throne, whatsoever impediments and discouragements it may meet with in the way, as if we excluded the use of other means; nay, faith will stir thee up to every mean the Lord in his providence offereth unto thee, as knowing, that to trust God and to neglect the means, is to tempt God to work a miracle, and to provoke him to do no more for us, who would not improve what he offered for our help. O! but faith in the use of the means will, 1. regulat our choice and keep us back from all sinfull and unlawfull means, though our strait were never so great, and they never so probable and promising. 2. Faith will regulate the use of them and will make us keep them in a due subordination, not relying or trusting in them, but only in God, who can, as he pleaseth, bless or blast them, and who can work for us though they were removed; and therefore, though all creature-help did fail, yet a believer could him

and depend upon a word of promise, till the Lord did beat him off by declaring his purpose as to the particular, and then submission will come in the place of faith. 3. As faith dare not tie God to the means, So neither as to the time, way and manner of working; it dare not limit the Lord nor prescribe to him, but will securely rest upon Gods wisdom, love and care, and leave all to Gods disposal.

3. Quietness, serenity, calmness and composure of spirit after prayer, is a good evidence of faith acted in prayer; what can liberat the heart of anxiety, fear, solicitude and carking cares? what can rebuke these storms and make a calm in the soul if the Lord himself do not speak peace to it, and if he do not fasten the hand of faith upon the rock of strength and defence, and cause the soul rest safely there, notwithstanding all the boisterous winds that may blow from without? *Deep calleth unto deep: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me,* saith the Psalmist: But what? had he no stay nor shelter under this storm? his faith discovered a rock, and unto that he did flee; his faith did close with a promise, which being pleaded in prayer, he espied a command for mercy and deliverance flowing from thence, *Psa. 42. 7. 9. 8.* And then particularly, he applyeth the remedy to this distemper, and chideth his own soul for being disquieted and cast down, having the cure at hand: What? O my soul, hast thou not put up a prayer to God, (v. 8.) and yet art disquieted? hast thou not faith? canst thou not hope and confidently expect a return of thy prayers? Oh! trust in God, and be no more troubled and perplexed: And to shew how groundless and unreasonable his disquietness was, he repeats this pathetic question thrice, *Psa. 42. 5. 11. Psa. 43. 5.* What made *Hannah*, who came to the throne with a sorrowfull spirit, go away rejoicing, and her countenance be no more sad? *1 Sam. 1. 15. 18.* She came doubting and went away believing; and now, knowing that God had heard her prayer, she looked no more sad. And what was it that supported *Paul* and calmed his spirit while he was buffeted by the messenger of *Sathan*? the tryal and temptation still continued, albeit he had prayed against it once and again, but was
he

he thereby discouraged? nay, on the contrary, his faith from thence collected a surer and encouraging conclusion, that since he had prayed, and the particular was withheld, therefore the Lord purposed to do him good by the trial; and therefore in the *interim* he should not want strength and assistance, for wrestling with the temptation: the grace of God should be sufficient for him in the combat, and for gaining to him a compleat victory at length, 2 Cor. 12, 7, 8, 9. And what was it that quieted and composed *David's* spirit, under that sad and long continued trial, while the Lord for so long a time delayed to answer the many prayers he had put up for deliverance from his enemies? *I had fainted* (saith he) *unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living*, Ps. 27. 13. his faith and confidence, that God at length would answer his prayers, did keep him at his work, and from despondency and dejection of spirit.

4. Waiting and looking for an answer, is a good symptom thou hast prayed in faith; if thou stand upon thy watch-tower, to see what the Lord will say unto thee, and what answer he will send thee (as the Prophet, while he waited for the vision) it is an evidence that (with him, *Habak.* 2, 3.) thou expectest it will surely come: when thou hearkenest what God will say, its a token thou belevest he will speak, Ps. 85. 8. but if thou pray, and lookst not after a return (which is the sin and folly of too many) though thou mayst have gone to the throne in obedience to the command, and that thou mightest perform that piece of homage to thy Master and Lord, yet not in faith, laying hold on the promise of thy kind Father: if thou expectedst an answer, thou wouldst wait for it; and wouldst not run away from Gods door so soon as thou hadst knocked.

5. If under our trials and sad sufferings, and when the Lord seemeth to hide himself in the day of our trouble, and (x) to turn away our prayers; yea, if when by his providence, he hath manifested his purpose not to give the particular we have once and again petitioned, and many days waited for; if notwithstanding we are not only silent and submissive, patiently acquiescing in his will, but also thank-

full and cheertfull; if thou not only justifie his majesty, and take shame to thy self, as being unworthy of the least of his mercies, but also magnifie and praise him, while he thus seemeth to smite thee, and frustrate thy expectation, is a notable evidence of thy faith, that thou hast prayed in faith, and dost by faith live and rest upon his love and care: thus *David* (as to afflictions and crosse dispensations) acted his faith, *Ps.* 22. though he was a reproach of men, though they did laugh him to scorn, shoot out the lip, and shake the head at him, and though the Lord was silent while he cryed to him in the day time and night season, *ver.* 1, 2. yet he justifieth God, and taketh shame to himself. *But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel!* --- but *I am a worm*, *ver.* 3, 6. and still trusteth in God, praiseth his goodness, and inviteth others to joyn with him in that exercise, *ver.* 9, 22, 23, 25. And then for the other case, viz. of denial and frustration, as to the particular askt; the same holy man is a notable pattern, who having fasted and prayed for the recovery of his sick child, yet so soon as he heard he was dead, anointed himself, and went to the house of God to worship and praise him; and being comforted himself, comforted also *Bathsheba* his wife, *2 Sam.* 12. 20. 24. Now what can uphold the heart under crosse dispensations and sad disappointments, but faith, which can look up to God as the hearer of prayers; who, when he doth not answer us, *ad votum* (as *(b)* *Austin* speaketh) yet *ad profectum*, who mindeth our good when he granteth not our desire; and doth that which is better for us, when he withholdeth what we askt: and thus when reason can espie no evil in the enjoyment of such a supposed mercy, yet faith will look higher, and rest upon the wisdom, care and fidelity of him, who hath promised to withhold nothing that is good from his honest suppliants, and to make all things work for their good: Hence, faith will not only submit to the present dispensation, but will thankfully praise God, who hath ordered all things for the best, and done what was most favorable for us, and most subservient to his glory in our everlasting happiness.

(b) Aug. loc. cit.
*Permittas
 istis expendere
 re numinibus
 quid, Conveni-
 at nobis re-
 busque sit utile
 nostris. Nam
 pro iurandis
 a tissima qua-
 que dabunt De-
 iuvenal. Sat.
 10.*

6. Albeit an immediat testimony, either concerning our state and adoption, or concerning our acceptance and answer of our prayers be not usual and ordinary, yet the latter is more rare then the former. If we speak, 1. of an immediat testimony; and, 2. of a perswasion that God will give the very particular we prayed for; but otherwise, 1. a general assurance and perswasion built upon, and drawn from the promises; and, 2. a perswasion that God will hear and answer our prayers, in that way which is best for us, is that condition and qualification of prayer after which we enquire. But as to that immediat and particular testimony, albeit it be not ordinary, yet some eminent Saints at some special occasions have met with it; and such might close their prayer, as Christ began his, *Joh. 11. 41. Father I thank thee that thou hast heard me*; as to the very particular I have prayed for: but this cannot properly be called a mark of faith, it being the highest measure and degree of that faith which falleth under the present disquisition; and, 2. because light needeth not another light, that it may be seen and discerned, but this particular perswasion is a beam of divine light, clearly shining before our eyes; and therefore needeth no further discovery, nor any marks whereby we may know it. But as to the other testimony concerning our state, whether it be immediat and by way of direct illumination and irradiation, or mediately by application of the word, or argumentation from it; however (I say) this assurance and perswasion be wrought in the heart, it is a good foundation, from which we may (if the fault lie not much at our door) gather the other assurances concerning the success of our prayers; For, *if we know that we have eternal life, and believe on the name of the Son of God; this is the confidence that we may have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; whatsoever we ask, and that we have the petitions we do stand of him.* 1. *Joh. 5. 14, 15.* If the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and speak to thy heart and tell thee (as once he did (i) *Daniel* by an audible voice) that thou art *greatly beloved*, he will also say to thee, as he said to (b) him, that thy words and prayers are heard: if the Lord

(i) Dan. 10.

(b) Ver. 13.

Smile

fall upon thee, and embrace thee, he will deal kindly with thee, and welcome thee indeed: he is not like dissembling men, who will use the highest expressions of love, and entertain with the fairest words and complements, those whom they least respect, and to whom they purpose to shew no favour, nor to grant any of their requests.

O! if we were more humbled for our unbelief, and did more seriously lay to heart, 1. our sin and ingratitude, in having such hard thoughts of so good a Master, and distrust- ing such a kind and loving Father; 2. our folly, in not only thus provoking our God to hide his face; but also by vexing and tormenting our selves with imaginary fears, and depriv- ing our heart of that quiet and peace which is the proper fruit of faith; why should *Jacob* mourn for his *Benjamin*, going to his elder and kind brother *Joseph*? his fear was but imaginary, and grounded upon a mistake; and such is thy fear, O believing soul; are not thy prayers sent to thy *Joseph*, and will not he accept and welcome them? and hath he not moyen with the King, and shall thy *Benjamin*, the Son of thy right hand, return empty? nay, but he shall come with wagons full of provision for the way, and to carry thee in length to thy beloved *Joseph*. Ah! what a scandall are we to our holy profession, what are the promises such dry brasts, ? is thy God so hard a Master? is there nothing in the word of life to keep thee from fainting in the day of trouble? hast thou no advantage of Pagans and Atheists? nay, if thou dost not live by faith, and look up to God for an answer to thy prayers; unbelievers acting a kind of natu- ral (1) faith, may (as to the present case) have the advan- tage of thee; ah! how should Christians under their dejection and despondency, blush when they hear of the compo- sure of spirit, and confidence of that excellent moralist (m) *Numa Pompilius*, who hearing of the approach of the ene- my, was so whie dismayed of their number, resolution, valour, strength, &c. but resting securely upon divine provi- dence, and (as *Patriarch* faith) laughing, as it were, at their folly and madness, the Lord being engaged in his quarrel, replied, and said no more at these news, but *ego sacrifico*,

(1) *Arising from natural reason and some common notions of a Deity, and of the divine attributes; but not leaning to a word of promise.*

(m) *Ipsum vero Numam adeo divina in re spes suas colloasse perhibent, ut cum aliquando hostis hostium adveniret, atque incursum manu arum esset, subrideret, discoretque, at ego sacrifico, Patriarch, vita Grat. Rom. fol. (mibi) 14. Lap. Flor. inser.*

I am busie offering sacrifice to God, and therefore I do not fear what men can do.

1. Quest.

Here it may be askt. 1. what faith did *Adam* in innocency act in worshipping God, and calling upon his name?

We will not enquire how long *Adam* continued in that state, albeit we see no ground for that peremptory assertion of Schol-men, concerning the (n) apostacy of Angels next instant after their creation, yet we grant, that very early, both devils and man did fall; the Scripture telleth us that *the devil sinned from the beginning*, 1 John. 3. 8. And the *figh news* we hear of man after his creation, Gen. 2. is his fall and yielding to the temptation, Gen. 3. and it is not improbably thought, that he continued not in innocency for the space of one whole day; so that the present question had place but for a very short while; to which we answer, that *Adam*, while innocent, exercised, and if he had continued in that state, would still have exercised the faith of intrepide dependance upon God, for the accomplishment of his promises. As *Adam* had a rule and law (whereof only one part is mentioned, Gen. 2. 16. 17.) so he had promises and encouragements for doing his duty, to which he did faithfully assent; till the dark night of temptation surprised him; but this faith did immediately close with God, and lean to his mercy, power, fidelity; &c. For *Adam*, before the fall, did not know the Mediator, nor any thing of the mystery of incarnation, and therefore could not tender up his worship in the name of Christ. It is true, and as there is *dispenſation* in *domin* (as our Divines disposing against *Aerians* speak) so that he would have believed that mystery if it had been revealed to him; but it seemeth strange, that any should imagine that *Adam* in that state did know that mystery; but yet it seemeth more absurd and irrational to affirm (according to the common (and) opinion of the popish Doctors) that he knew the mystery of incarnation, and yet was ignorant of the mystery of redemption, and of his own apostacy, and falling away from that blessed benediction; but supposing both the one and the other to have been known to *Adam*, yet whilst the first covered his eyes, *Adam* could not look to the Mediator.

(n) Thom. 1. quaest. 63. art. 6. Bannez. in locum & alii passim.

Thom. 1. quaest. 63. art. 6. Bannez. in locum & alii passim.

(b) Thom. 1. quaest. 63. art. 6. Bannez. in locum & alii passim.

Thom. 1. quaest. 63. art. 6. Bannez. in locum & alii passim.

and testimony of God ; which though it be a foundation of the greatest certainty, yet not of clearness and evidence.

We will not prosecute that debate any further, but to the question propounded, we answer, that speaking of faith, as it (x) importeth an assent founded upon the word, authority and testimony of God ; if we suppose the Saints in heaven to pray, we must also think, that by faith they lay hold on a word of promise ; and do confidently rest thereupon for an answer to their prayers. You will say, the promises only belong to *viators*, and not to those who have finished their course ? *Ans.* Hath not the Lord promised to raise up their bodies, and to absolve and acquit them in the day of judgment ? &c. and do not these promises yet belong to them ? But as to their prayers for others, we may here apply what we (y) observed from *Petrus de Tarantasia*, concerning Christ his intercession for us ; albeit the Saints in glory stand not in need of those things themselves, yet we for whom they ask them, do stand in need of them, and they may plead the promises made to us : But you will say, Christ pleadeth for us upon his own account and the title of purchase ? *Ans.* I grant the disparity to be so great, that it were intolerable once to institute a comparison ; but you will yet reply, if they only plead the promises made to others, that cannot be a foundation for their faith : *Ans.* It may be justly questioned, whether the promises of audicence, with which their faith might close while they were on earth, do belong to them now in heaven, and therefore it may also be questioned, whether now indeed they do pray ; but supposing they do, we must also suppose that they want not a promise of audicence for their encouragement ; unless we will have them to run as uncertainly, and shoot at a venture. You will say, may not they plead the promises made to others, relying on Gods fidelity to perform these promises ? *Ans.* But what is their warrant to interpose and if they have a command for their warrant, they must also have a promise for their encouragement. But, a albeit they may know in the general that God will perform his promises, yet they know not to whom in particular the absolute promises do belong,

(x) And if we lay aside the former controversy, we shall have these adversaries themselves belong to joy with us in the general, for, (and Lugo, loc. cit. disp. 17. sect. 3. § 15. certum omnino videtur, & extra controverfiam, quod in beatis possit esse fides late sumpta, hoc est assensus fundatus in revelatione modis Dei. (y) Ibid. 1. chap. pag. 85.

long untill they be accomplished ; yea and even then they may hesitate, as not being able nor called to search the heart, and as to the measure of outward things, which is fit and convenient for every believer, and what is the fittest time and season to receive, &c. they can but conjecture.

But still standing to the supposition that they do pray, it is certain they must ask in Christs name and for his sake, as the author and alone-purchaser of all the good things they can ask. As to the prayers of the holy Angels (that being also grounded upon a supposition) the case is not so clear, since it dependeth upon another question, *viz.* whether Christ be not only the Lord and head, but also the Mediatour of Angels, they being, in him and for his merit, confirmed in that blessed state and kept from falling ; but though we did suppose, that as (2) *he took not on him their nature*, So he was (2) Heb. 2:16, not their Redeemer ; yet, they might ask in his name for others, what he by his blood did purchase for them.

A third question may be this, whether the misbelief of the promises or of the threatnings be the greater sin ? 3. *Quest.* *Ans.* If the question were concerning total unbelief, what sin can be more grievous ? But, the comparison being between the seeming faith of hypocrits and the partial (may I not also say involuntary) unbelief of Saints, we shall speak to that in these few particulars. 1. Albeit both the one and the other, in the general, profess their assent unto, and belief of, both the promises and threatnings ; yet, in the application, there is a wofull miscarriage on both hands, the one without ground applying the promises, and the other fearing the threatnings when there is no cause of fear. 2. Thus the one is the sin and dolefull neck-break of the wicked, the other is the infirmity and sad tryal of the Saints ; the one is the sin of presumption and hypocritical kindness of enemies, the other the sin of jealousy, unkindness and ingratitude of children ; the one banisheth fear and trouble for the time, but maketh way and prepareth for eternal wo and misery ; the other is uncomfortable for the present, but is like an Eclipse or Sea-sickness that will quickly pass. And thus, 3. the one is foolishly mercifull to himself, entertaining a ground-

less fancy of Gods mercy as separated from his holiness and justice; yea and denying the truth of the threatnings that stand against him, he saith claim to the promises to which he hath no right, and maketh lies his refuge, and so perissheth in his delusion, going to hell laughing and rejoycing, hoping the best till he find the worst, and see his case to be remediless; the other is unadvisedly cruel to himself, tormenting and vexing his own soul with a needles jealousy; the one goeth laughing to hell, the other weeping to heaven; the one enjoyeth a fools paradise on earth, the other a sort of hell in this life, living in darkness till the dawning of the glorious and long-lasting day of eternity. And thus, both mistaking their state and condition, the one apprehending it to be better, the other to be worse then it is, both pass a wrong sentence, the one for, the other against himself, both mis-applying the Scriptures, the one to his eternal ruine, the other to his present trouble and disquiet: and thus it is easie to judge whose case is most dangerous, and whose fault and error most grievous; only let me add a word to the doubting (or shall I say unbelieving) believer, from (a) *Jeroms* pathetick encomium of, and exhortation to, exercise and act faith, particularly in prayer. *If I (saith this holy man) did not believe, I could not pray; but having faith, with what humility, tenderness, reverence and godly fear may we draw nigh to God? &c.*

(a) Non orarem si non crederem; sed si vere crederem, illud cor quo Deus videtur mundarem, manibus tenderem pectus;

genas lacrymis rigarem, corpore inhorrescerem, ore pallerem, jacerem ad Dandum mei pedes, coque solum perfunderem, crine tergerem, barerem certo trans crucis, nec prius amitterem quam misericordiam impetrarem: Nunc vero creberrimo in oratione mea ut per porticus decumbula, aut de Janore computo, aut abduellus turpi cogitatione etiam qua distu erubescenda sumi gero. Ubi est fides? Siccine putamus orasse Jonam? Sic tres queras? Sic Daniele in inter Leones? Sic certe Layrouem in crucis? Hieronymi, dialog. advers. Lucifer.

CHAP. III.

Some consequent conditions, What we must do after we come from the throne of Grace. 1. We must wait; 2. watch; 3. be busie in using the means; and, 4. renewing our requests; and, 5. we must thankfully improve what the Lord giveth in return to our prayers.

With a word concerning the necessity of these and the former qualifications.

Pla. 85. 8. I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for, he will speak peace unto his people—but let them not turn again to folly.

Pla. 50. 15. Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.

1 Chr. 30. 18, 19. The good Lord pardon every one, &c.

HAVING spoken of the antecedent and concomitant qualifications of an acceptable prayer, now come we to show what must be done after we go from the throne. Ah! too many go to work heedlessly and without all kind of preparation, and perform it perfunctoriously and in a dead formal manner; and no wonder though such have done when they have said, that when they leave off to speak, they minde the work no more; but thou who tookst heed to thy steps while thou drewst nigh, and who wast serious when thou didst approach, pouring out thy soul unto thy God, wilt expect some fruit of thy labour and wilt take heed to thy wayes, lest by thy folly, thou shouldst intercept and obstruct the return of thy prayers.

1. Then, after thou hast poured out thy complaint to God, thou must wait, listen and diligently observe when he answereth and how far he answereth thy prayers, we must hear *What God the Lord will speak*, *Pla. 85. 8.* If we presented a supplication to a King, how would he think himself mocked if we did not stay for an answer? If beggars knock and cry, but will not wait till an alms come, who will send it
wait after

after them? Ah! 1. are we not Gods subjects and servants, and should we not look up to our King and Master, and patiently wait till he have mercy upon us? *Psa.* 123. 2. Did the Lord ever disappoint them who thus did wait and depend upon him? *I/a.* 26. 3. *Psa.* 85. 8. *Mis.* 7. 7. *Psa.* 107. 43. 3. But if ye will not wait for an answer, if no answer come, know who should bear the blame; if the beggar be gone while the alms is coming, his pride, impatience and sloth must be the cause of his not receiving; faith is not more necessary in asking, then that we may receive; and if ye do not wait, unbelief must say, (a) *what? should I wait on the Lord any longer?* And (with them, *Job.* 21. 15.) *what profit have we if we pray to him?* It was in vain to pray and now to look for an answer. 4. Nay, though the Lord answer in wrath, and reward thy contempt and the dishonour done to his name with some remarkable judgment, thou hadst no cause to complain; who could endure such an indignity? *what is truth?* said *Pilat* to Christ, and when he had said, he goth away and will not wait for an answer, *Job.* 18 38. Ah! will ye deal no better with the great God, then a mocking pagan dealt with Christ in the day of his reproach? may ye not fear lest he be avenged on you for this dishonour, in injury and affront offered to his Majesty? 5. Al you thus dishonour God and provoke him not only to withhold the desired mercy, but also to take the rod in his hand; So, if the Lord should answer, follow and pursue you with his mercies while ye are running away from him, you would deprive your selves of a double advantage. 1. Of the joy and comfort that redounds to an honest supplicant, when he observeth God to have hearkened to his desire; nay, the comfort that many times ariseth from this consideration doth exceed the satisfaction reaped by the naked enjoyment of the mercy it self, that being an evidence of our adoption, of Gods love towards us, of our moyen with him, &c. 2. We thus deprive our selves of a notable mean, 1. for strengthening our faith in the promises; 2. for clearing the Lords fidelity in keeping his word to his servants; and, 3. for judging of the sincerity of our hearts and wayes; and knowing when we

(a) 2 King.
6, 33.

have prayed acceptably; and, 4. for encouraging us to continue instant in prayer, and to say, (with him, *Psa.* 116. 2.) *therefore will I call upon God as long as I live.* And as thus you are injurious to your selves, So also to the Lord and to your brethren. 1. To the Lord, if he should answer; ye who do not hearken, would not hear; ye who would not look up to him, would not see nor discern his hand, but would (b) *sacrifice to your own nes*, and ascribe that mercy to your own wisdom, activity, moyen with, or power over, some creature, helper and second cause: and thus, though God should deliver us in the day of our trouble, yet we would not glorifie him; nor would we (with him, *Psa.* 116. 1, 2.) say, *I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice, &c.* 2. If we were carefull to ponder Gods wayes towards us, and laid up experiences, we might be helpfull to others, especially to weak Saints and to children of light walking in darkness; our experiences might prove a mean to support and strengthen their faith; if God regard the prayer of the destitute, this shall be written for the generation to come, *Psa.* 102. 17, 18. See this point more fully demonstrated and improven, by Mr. Goodw. *Rev. of Pray. ch.* 10. Ah! where is the man who hath not reason to smite his breast and say, wo's me that I am so guilty of so vile, ungrate, foolish and mischievous an offence? O! let us justifie God if he hath not heard us, while we did not listen nor hear what he would say; and O! if we were more carefull to amend this fault that is so common and ordinary, that we would no more so carry, as if we thought with Atheists that our praying were lost labour: and if we will trust God and depend upon him, we shall have no cause to be ashamed of our expectation; he will not fail nor disappoint us; if we will go to our watch-tower (as the Prophet did after he had prayed, *Hab.* 1. 12, 13. &c.) we would (with him, *ch.* 2. 3.) find, that an answer would in length come; that at the end it should speak and not lie; though it tarried (as to our sense and apprehension) yet if we waited for it, it should not tarry nor be suspended for one moment, after the fit, convenient and due time.

But as this waiting upon God doth import a looking up to him, so, 1. a patient and submissive, a silent and believing expectation, and not fainting all the while the Lord delayeth to answer our prayers; *he that believeth will not make haste*, but will patiently wait upon the Lord his God, till he have mercy upon him, *Isa. 28. 16., Ps. 123. 2.* he will not fret because of cross-dispensations, but will rest on the Lord, and commit his way unto him; knowing, that at length he will bring forth his righteousness as light, and his judgment as the noon-day, *Ps. 37. 7, 5, 6. We have need of patience, that we may receive the promise.* Least, if we fret, the promised mercy be withheld, *Heb. 10. 36.* Its not enough, that we once believe and assent to the promise, but we must wait the fit time for its accomplishment: And thus, as we have need of *faith*, so also of *patience*, that we may inherit, and be put in possession of the promised mercy, *Heb. 6. 12.* Some Pagans have shown much magnanimity and composure of spirit under their trials and sad disappointments, who yet were strangers to this confident and filial dependance upon God, and to this Christian patience, which is founded upon better grounds and spiritual motives, and which is the daughter of faith, and one of the priviledges and ornaments of the heirs of glory; being of a heavenly descent, and coming from him, who is the fountain and author of all our graces: we would soon faint, if we were not *strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, with all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness*, *Colos. 1. 11.* There may be some appearance of joy in hypocrites and mortals, in the day of their trouble and trial; but there can be no real and solid joy, but in believers, who know, that *yet a little while, and he who shall come will come, and will not tarry*, *Heb. 10. 37.* And that the Lord waiteth till the fit and appointed time come, that he may be gracious to us, and bless us indeed, *Isa. 30. 18.* As the Spirit helpeth us to pray, so to wait till the fit time for us to receive come; hence, the Lord is called *the God of patience*, not only because he exerciseth it toward us, but (c) because he worketh it in us, *Rom. 15. 5.* O! then let us labour to exercise this heavenly

(c) Especially since there also he is called the God of consolation, which must be interpreted of his working of it in us, and making us rejoice,

grace, and our labour shall not be in vain; the more thou
 dost venture in thy trade with heaven, and the greater stock
 of prayers thou sendest forth, thou mayest expect the larger
 return; nay, and the longer thou waitest, thou maist expect
 the more gain; as knowing thy trade to be carrying on all
 the while, and thy stock to be in his hand, who during the
 delay will improve it to thy best advantage, who will not
 suffer it to miscarry, nor thee to be on the losing hand who
 hast intrusted it to him; yea, and, 2. such mercies as are
 long expected and waited for, are most sweet and welcom (d)
ex data vile sunt; what we quickly and easily get, we
 undervalue; but what we have often askt and desired, and
 long waited for, proveth sweet and refreshing. A love-letter
 and token from a dear friend, we thought to have been dead,
 will bring much delight and content; and those vessels, when
 the voyages prove long and dangerous, so that the owners
 have made their account they shall never hear of them again,
 as they use to return with the greater advantage, so their
 return is more refreshing and comfortable; so when our
 faith is ready to fail, and we look upon our prayers as (e)
head cast upon the waters, and as so much lost pains; when
 answer cometh, and a love-token from our God (whom (e) Eccl. 11, 1,
 we through unbelief had almost thought to have forgotten
 us) O, how sweet and acceptable will it prove! and the
 more we read and peruse those missives from our heavenly
 Father (especially coming by the hand of a messenger we
 judge to be lost, and as dead) we will observe some precious,
 and (as it were) new passages, which will mightily refresh and
 comfort us, and will become a seal and notable evidence of
 his love to us, and strong a support of our faith and confidence
 in him. But, 3. if we weary and faint, we may, through
 our impatience and discontent, provoke the Lord to recall
 (as it were) his former grant, and not to answer these pray-
 ers, which otherwise might have laid claim to the pro-
 mise, and would not have wanted a gracious return and
 answer. But as we must thus wait, so, 2. we must watch; as we
 must look up to God, so we must look in to our own hearts,
 and

and about us, to our wayes and course; as we must watch *unto* prayer, and *in* prayer, so also *after* prayer. Satan alwaies lieth in wait, and we know not; he may have train laid, when and where we are least apprehensive of danger, but when we see any temptation which is his scout, we may know that the enemy of our souls is not far off; and that we become not a prey to his temptations, we must *watch and pray*, Mat. 26: 41. There must be a reciprocal sequel and consequence of the one from the other; as we must watch and pray, So we must pray and watch; nay, upon a special account we must watch after prayer, that the influence of that ordinance may abide upon our heart, and that we lose not that life, vigour, and heat which useth to accompany the spiritual performance of this heavenly exercise; a cold catched after heat is most dangerous, and yet it is most usually, if it be not prevented by a watchfull care and circumspection. And therefore, as *in prayer* we must (f) lift up holy hands, so *after prayer* we would take heed to our feet, and then when we come from the throne, we do not run to the mire to wallow in it. *If we would receive whatsoever we ask, we must keep the commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in the sight of God*, 1 Joh. 3. 22. The Lord will hide his face from them, who behave themselves ill in their doings, and will not hear them though they cry, *Amos* 3. 4. If we regard iniquity in our heart (whether before or after prayer) the Lord will not hear nor answer us, *Psal.* 66: 18. If the Saints, after they have prayed, and are waiting for an answer, return to folly, God will not speak peace, *Psal.* 85, 9. Sin will make God hide his face and draw back his hand, *Isa.* 59. 2. If after we went from the Kings presence, we disobeyed his commands, plotted and conspired against him, and that under his eye, and while he were looking on; what folly and madness were it to expect that he would regard and answer these supplications we had presented to him; and is not this our case? Ah! many desperate sinners deal no better with God, then *Abselem* with *Joab*, 2 Sam. 14: 30. while the Lord delays to answer their requests, *they set his shield on fire, and set their face against the heavens, as if they thought*

(f) 1 Tim. 2. 8.

(g) 2 Pet. 3.
2. 2.

thought to break him with their ill deeds, whom they could not persuade by entreaties; or else, since they cannot help the matter, either in revenge against God, or to make a compensation to themselves, they will (b) follow after their loves, and seek to satisfy their lusts; that since the Lord would not answer these desires they offered up to him, they may fulfill the desires of the flesh, which are contrary to his holy will, and sweet and well-pleasing to their sensual appetite.

3. As we must watch and pray, and pray and watch, so we must pray and pray; its not enough once to present our requests, but we must renew our sute and fortifie our plea; we must ask again and again; we must not keep silence, nor lift our peace, nor give him any rest (according to the expression, *Isa* 62. 2.) till he shew mercy upon us, and grant our requests; thus the primitive Church prayed for *Peters* enlargement and deliverance, *Act*. 12. 5. And thou art allowed and commanded to follow this course; the gates of heaven are never shut, and thou maist get access to the King when, and as often as thou wilt, he will not chide with thee, because of thy importunity and frequent addresses, but he complaineth when we faint and hold our peace, *Isa*. 43. 32. and commands us to continue instant in prayer, *Rom*. 12. 12. *Eph*. 6. 18. *Colos*. 4. 2. 3 *Thes*. 5. 17. And as in every thing, so alwaies to make our requests known unto him; and promisseth that our labour shall not be lost, *Phil*. 4. 6, 7. *Luk*. 18. 1. &c. And giveth this as one reason why he will not answer hypocrites, crying to him in the day of their trouble; because they having no delight in the Almighty, will not alwaies call upon him, *Job*. 27. 9, 10. Prayer is a wearisome burden to many, which they must quickly shake off, and then for a pretence, are ready to say (with him, *King*. 8. 33.) its in vain to wait upon God any longer; we are ready to complain that God will not hear, while he regrateth we will not cry; if we continued instant in prayer, an answer would certainly come, and would not tarry. See *Chap*. 2. *Self*. 1.

4. As we must be busie at the throne, so we must not be idle at home; as we must not forget the Lords work, and what

what duty else he calls for at our hands, So neither must we forget our own work; as we must *continue instant in prayer*, Rom. 12. 12. So we must *not be slothfull in business*; and yet we must not so minde our own, as to forget the *Lords Work and service*, v. 11. There ought to be a subordination, but there is no opposition between the Lords work and our work; that must have the precedency, but this may follow in its own place; and in it, as we are to look up to God for the blessing, so we must be doing our selves: Prayer doth not exclude the use of the means, nor give to us a *super-~~sedat~~* from our work and labour; if (i) *any will not work, neither should he eat*, 2 Thes. 3. 10. Ah! you will say, may he not pray, and should a praying Saint starve? may he not eat? Ah! why should we not pray? but prayer must not be pretended as a cloak for our negligence: whosoever he be, though a Saint and fervent supplicant, yet, saith the Apostle, if he will not work, let him not eat, *οὐκ ἔσται μετὰ τὴν οὐσίαν*, *Dei xadoi, ora & labora*. Prayer doth not exclude our diligence and activity, but we must pray (k) *and work*: as we must lift up our heart to heaven, So we must put to our hand to our work on earth, *precibu(que) manibus, &c.* Hence some of the ancient Doctors, in allusion (as I would think, rather then intending to hold out the meaning and true sense of the place) to these words, *Lam. 3. 41. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God*, do (l) tell us, that such as pray and do not work, do make a divorce and separation of these two the Prophet hath conjoynd; they lift up their heart, but not their hands, to God: yea (saith (m) one) *he who prayeth and doth not work, doth tempt and provoke God*. The husband-man must not lye on his bed when he should attend his work; and by his prayers expect a good crop; the Lord hath not appointed the means in vain: and though thou shouldst not trust in them nor distrust God when they are not afforded, yet thou must expect the blessing from the Almighty in the use of the means, which in his providence

(i) *Vid. Hieronym. lib. 1. epis. 55. Marco Presb.*

(k) *Valde namque apud Deum utraque hac sibi necessaria congruunt, ut & oratione operatio, & operatio fulciatur oratio, Greg. moral. lib. 18. cap. 3.*

(l) *Hinc Hieronimus ait, levemus corda nostra cum manibus ad Deum: Corda vero cum manibus levat, qui orationem suam operibus roborat; nam quisquis orat, sed operari diffinit, cor levat, & manus non levat, &c. Gregor.*

moral. lib. 18. cap. 3. & eisdem de verbis, Hieron. in Lam. 3. & Bernard, de mol, ben, viv, (m) *Orans & non operans iram provocat.*

he offereth to thee: What? dost thou pray against sin, and dost thou not resolve against it? dost thou not fight against it, and strive and endeavour to mortifie it? prayest thou for grace, and dost thou not attend the ordinances and diligently improve the means of grace? thy prayers are a provocation, they cannot be serious; for if thou didst earnestly desire, thou wouldst strive and give all diligence that thou might obtain: wouldst thou have God to help thee who wilt not help thy self, nor enter in at the door he hath opened? though the Lord stands not in need of thy help and industry, yet wherefore doth he put a price in thy hand if thou oughtest not improve it? If then thou wouldst have *the Lord to be with thee*, thou must *arise and be doing*, 1 Chron. 22. 16. If thou wouldst have *the Lord to meet thee with his help*, thou must be *working righteousness*, Isa. 64. 5. *The Lord hath appointed* (said (n) the Pagan) *that virtue should be purchased by our sweat. None can be happy* (saith another) *who is not active and diligent*: though we must pray for salvation, yet we must *work out our own salvation, and give all diligence to make our calling and election sure*, Phil. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 10. I do not think that there are any (a) Euchites or Messalians now a dayes, who teach that we should do nothing but pray; yet, there be too many hypocrites and formal professors, who think to come to heaven by their empty, cold, lifeless and dead prayers, *who having a form of godliness, deny the power of it*, 2 Tim. 3. 5. who cry at the gate, but never strive to enter in, *they seek to enter in*, but with the mouth only and in a lazy formal way; and thus they are not able, their crying will not do the turn, Luke 13. 24. It is thought a fault among men to welcom and entertain idle beggars, thus they who are the reproach of the Kingdom, who have no order nor government, and neither fear God nor are encouraged and increased; and shall the holy one hear and answer those out-laws and rebels who have respect to none of his commands? and will he fill their hands who will not put to their hands to his work, nor do what he requires? their negligent, yea and stubborn omission of duty, will out-cry their prayers, yea every command of God,

which

(n) Hesiod.
 ὁ δὲ πρῶτος
 ἰδρῶτα δαδῶ
 ἀγορεύει
 ἰδὲ καὶ.
 Virtutem pos-
 suero dii iuda-
 re parandum
 Et Menand.
 μοχθῶν ἀν-
 αγκυλῶν δα-
 λυτὰς ἰσχυ-
 ρῶν.
 Ne sis beatus
 est laboran-
 dum tibi.
 (o) Vid. Au-
 gusti de heresi-
 sib. ad Quod-
 vultdeum,
 cap. 37.

Q^{ue}st. Ah! will many honest supplicants say, if we must pray thus, if all these particulars must concur, and be required to the acceptable performance of this duty, if there must be such preparation before; such fervency and importunity in the work; and such watchfulness and diligence must follow after; wo is me! what are become of all my prayers? I fear, I have never yet prayed aright: and, O! that I might know whether all these qualifications, were essential and necessary; and if all be not alike necessary, what be those requisites which are more, and what less necessary. *Ans.* Albeit often such as have least cause to fear, are most jealous of themselves and their way; yet, 1. it's certain, that too many prayers are like *water spilt on the ground*, and like the *breathing of the air*, they being as no prayers in Gods account, because not such, and so qualified as he hath commanded, and doth require; and there is none of those qualifications we have named, which are not held forth and prescribed in the Word of God, and which doth not concur to the perfection of the work, and contribute to its acceptance and success: and therefore it were better (with the Psalmist, when he was going to praise God, *Pf.* 103. 1.) to stir up our soul and all that is within us, to joynt and contribute their help and assistance for the cheerfull and acceptable performance of our duty, not separating what the Lord hath conjoynd; then to trouble our selves with such a comparison, and by enquiring what may be forborn, spared and left undone, of that which the Lord hath commanded and required. Yet, 2. that no tender conscience may be disquieted, and that none may go about this duty with terror and fear, which should be performed with so much Son-like boldness and confidence; we grant that there are Scripture-grounds, and Scripture-instances, which, with the daily experiences of all Saints, do make it unquestionable, that God hath heard, and will hear the prayers of his servants, though they do not punctually observe and reflect upon all these several steps; and therefore, supposing, 1. that thou dost not wilfully, stubbornly and purposely omit, or slight any part of thy duty: 2. that thou hast respect to all Gods commandments, labour-

before the Lord, as in such, relying upon Christ's merit
and intercession; and in his name coming to God as the Father
of prayers; and the rewarder of all them who diligently seek
him; and, 3. with an eye to his glory, aiming at that as
thy great and chief scope and end; 4. that thou depend
upon him, patiently waiting till he shew mercy upon thee,
not daring to limit and prescribe to him, nor murmuring be-
cause he delayeth to give, or withholdeth the particular thou
desirest; and, 5. that if he fill thy hands with his mercies,
thy heart and mouth will be filled with his praises; suppo-
sing, I say, that thou dost pray thus, that the truth and
reality of all these (in whatsoever measure or degree) are to
be found in thy prayers, thou needest not fear; thy prayers
are acceptable, and the Lord will in his own time and way
hear and answer thee, and as a Father pitieth the sickness and
weakness of his tender Child. So the Lord in mercy pitieth
thee, and covereth all thine infirmities, and notwithstanding
thou must in faith plead the promises of audience, and con-
fidently wait for and answer to thy prayers. But, 3. If
thou make conscience of these few particulars, which thou
wilt not deny to be so necessary, the rest will not altogether
be deficient and wanting, though they be not so discernable
and obvious to every eye, nor so distinctly, expressly, and in
such a measure and manner as these we have now named, and
which appear to be more necessary; and therefore, though
these other qualifications be not seen, yet they are, and have
place in thy prayer; they are virtually and in the root, they
are truly and in some measure, though not sensibly and in
such a degree or perfection; so that albeit thou hast not set
so much time a part for preparing thy heart, and albeit thou
canst not say thou art a son, and in the state of grace, that
thou prayest in the holy Ghost, that thy ends are so pure
and spiritual, that thou hast such a measure of humility, im-
portunity, confidence, &c. yet thou, who dost thus call
upon God in sincerity, art in some measure fitted and pre-
pared to meet thy God, thou art in the state of grace, and
the

According to the will of God, and thou dost humbly believe and depend upon God, and with the heart importune and cry to him, &c. For, not only may the habits of grace lurk, but also their acts and exercise (if weak and remiss, and if mixed with the stirring and motions of the contrary vices) may be for a while insensible; and thus occasion not only scruples about their reality and existence, but also the denial thereof: And as to the measure of grace, there is such a multitude and variety, that it is difficult, if not impossible, here to (c) determine, either the *minimum* or *maximum*. Why then should weak Christians fish into such drumly waters, and raise those storms they are not able to calm?

But that what hath been said from the word of truth, for asserting these qualifications, may not (through a mistake) break any bruised reed, nor disquiet such as Christ would here comforted (though the weakest should hear and learn their duty, the extent of the promises, and the qualifications of their spiritual service, yet) since weak ones are ready to mistake both their state and work, and to judge hardly of themselves for want of light and dexterity, for reflecting upon, and discerning their condition and the quality of their performances and for making a right comparison of these with the rule, and so for passing a right judgment, and knowing their own case; we will bring some grounds, laid down by practical Divines, and collected from the Scriptures, which may serve to stay and uphold them, and which they, for their comfort, may make use of, as not being contrary to what hath been here said, albeit such cannot punctually ride the marches: We shall now only name these grounds, and refer to the Authors, where they are insisted on at greater length. But for preventing the abuse and mis-improvement of the condescension of our compassionate Lord, See our *Parallel, Part. 1. Chap. 2.* And we will begin with a passage of that excellent Commentary of our judicious and eminent Mr. Rollock, *We may observe* (saith (d) this reverend Divine)

*gradus ar
eight degrees
or intention,
four of which
are made ne-
cessary, that
any form or
quality may
denominat the
subject, so
we may sup-
pose (such a
measure of
grace here
attainable, and
necessarily
required for
the acceptance
of our perfor-
mances.
(d) *Videas
quantum re
placui Deo,
vel paucillum
fidei, et quan-
tum opere delecte-
sur precibus.
exquantula-
cunque fide
profectus, est.
amsi cunctis
ambabam
multiplicem
imperfec-
tionem, videmus
volgo potentes
magis delecta-
ri balbutienti
infantia in-
fantium, quam
universa elo-
quentia, &c.
Rolloc in Jo-
han. cap. 4.**

Divine) how much a little of faith doth please God, and how much he delighteth in those prayers that proceedeth from never so weak and small a measure of faith, albeit otherwise they be mixed with a great multitude of weakness and imperfections, as a Father will be more moved with, and delight more in the broken language of his stammering Child, than in all the eloquence of the greatest Orators, So our heavenly Father, &c.

2. It would be remembered (saith the pious and experienced Mr. (e) Dickson) that the Saints condition may no less please God when their spirits are straitned in prayer, then when they seem to be most enlarged; and the Apostle sheweth that the Saints may be so far bound up in spirit in the day of trouble, that they do not know what to ask, and must chuse to (end up groans in stead of prayers, Rom. 8. 26. So long then as the Saints study to bring forth the fruits of faith, and of the spirit, and do pray according to the will of God, asking what he hath promised, and in some measure of faith, are patiently waiting for an answer from God; their prayers and way doth please the Lord, whether their hearts be straitned or enlarged in prayer, 1 Joh. 5. 14, 15.

quandiu igitur
fructu laudis
fructibus fidei
fructibus
spiritus seren-
dis studentes
erant secun-
dum Dei vo-
luntatem, pe-
sentes id quod
Deus promisit
in fide, animi-
que submis-
sione et oratione a Deo, tandiu preces ipsorum & vota ipsorum Deo placent: pro
B. de consolationem a Deo, tandiu preces ipsorum & vota ipsorum Deo placent: pro
B. de consolationem a Deo, tandiu preces ipsorum & vota ipsorum Deo placent: pro

4. Though there be much (b) weakness in thy prayer,

yet if it doth not proceed from thy slothfulness and negligence, in when dost pray with all thy might; then though that thy might be weak in itself, and in thine own apprehension such, yet because it is all the might which thou hast, and which grace bath in thee, it shall be accepted, 2 Cor. 8. 12. Mr. Goodwin, Ret. pray. cha. 10 pag. (mibi) 56, 59.

5. The sinfull infirmities that cleave to a Christian and his duty, though they be the great bug-bear, with which many Shins are scared; yet if these be lamented and not cockered, they need not discourage thee; since the priviledges of the Covenant of Grace are not impropriated to a few favourites, more eminent in grace then their brethren, but stand open to the whole family, it being a common salvation, and like precious faith. God's promise for hearing of prayer, shall not be made void by the Saints weakness in prayer. Mr. Gurnal, Sp. Arm. part. 3. pag. 355. &c. Where the heart is upright and sincere, our infirmities shall not hinder our prayers; Jesus Christ doth away the weakness of our services: Those that do not allow their infirmities, may pray with hope of success; these will be no impediment. Mr. Manson, on Jam. 5. 17. Obs. 6. There is often faith, when there is little or no feeling; unbelief felt, bewailed, opposed and resisted, shall never hurt us. Mr. Harris, Pet. enlarg. pag. (mibi) 33.

PART. III:

PART III

Some practical Cases.



Having propounded several questions and
 answers, both speculative and practical, on
 occasion was offered in the two former
 Parts of this Treatise; we shall now
 by speaking a few which may be very use-
 full for clearing of doubts, and remov-
 ing some difficulties which may occur in
 the practice of this solemn performance, which did not so pro-
 perly belong to any of the heads already treated of, or which
 deserved a particular consideration; reserving some few things
 of this nature, touching the return of prayer, to Part 4. fourth.
 And here we shall only, 1. as to the *obj.* & to which our prayer
 must be directed, ask, how we should conceive of God's
 prayer, and after what order must we make our address to
 the persons of the blessed Trinity? 2. As to the *Author*
 and principal efficient, we shall enquire what are the causes
 why the Spirit doth withdraw his help and assistance, and
 what course should be taken for recovering and maintaining
 the quickning and assisting presence of the Spirit? And be-
 cause our enlargement and straitning doth much depend upon,
 and hath such a necessary connexion with, the presence and
 with-drawing of the Spirit, we shall speak to these, as also
 of wandering thoughts (which use to accompany our dead-
 ness and indisposition) their cure and remedy. And then as
 to the *matter* of prayer, 3. we shall ask whether we may
 pray for any rod or affliction? And, 4. whether we may
 imprecate and pray against any person or society? And, 5.
 as to the *time*, we shall enquire when and how often we
 should pray?

How should we conceive of God and of the persons of the glorious Trinity.

SECT. I.

What should be our apprehensions of the dreadful majesty of God when we come before him?

Job. 37. 22, 23. With God is terrible majesty; touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out.

Luk 11. 2. When ye pray, say, Our Father, &c.

With what humility, reverence and admiration should we (a) speak, write or think of the Almighty and incomprehensible God, who dwelleth in light to which no man can approach, whom no man hath seen nor can see; whose perfection cannot, by searching, be found out, whose counsel and wayes are a great depth, and whose infinit nature and majesty is so far above our reach and apprehension? 1 Tim. 6. 16. Job 11. 7, 8, 9. (b) Τὸ θεῶν ἀκατάληκτον, all that is in God is a mystery. Agur's question may give a check to our curiosity and boldness; O! (saith he) what is his name, and what is his sons name, if thou canst tell? Prov. 30. 4. The greatest Student in this mystery, the holiest Saint when he looks up to God, will see, with Zophar, a height and depth that cannot be measured, Job 11. 8. Agur in his Prophecy, while the Lord, in an extraordinary manner, did manifest himself to him, professeth his ignorance, and would begin at the first elements and A, B, C, and (c) ask but after his name, who hath gathered the wind in his fists, who hath bound the waters in a garment, and who hath established the ends of the earth. Nay, the holy Angels and the Saints in glory, though they see and behold so much of God as doth ravish their hearts with unspeakable joy and delight, and which doth fully satiate their utmost capacity; yet, O! what more, yea

(a) Eusebii supereminetia Dei, non solum uti-
tati eloqui, sed etiam in-
telligentia sci-
cultation; ve-
rius enim co-
gitatur Dom-
quam dicitur
et verum est
quam cogi-
tatur, Au-
gust. de vera
innoent. cap.

(b) Damas-
cen. lib. 1. de
fide oridit in
initio.

(c) Malzer
Burla-
danti, lib. 7.
polla. quasi.
10. Deum
quantum ad
eius essentiam
non esse à no-

bis laudandum, quis, ut. non est sic à nobis cognoscibilis. Nam licet sic non sit per-
fekte et quidditative cognoscibile, tamen scimus eum sic esse laudandum. Imo hoc est apertum
quid sit et primo cognitum.

(d) August.
in Pla. 85.

(e) Cicer. lib.
1. de nat. de-
or.
(f) Vid Schol.
ad 1. quest. 12.
(g) Scot in 1.
lib. sent. dist.
2. 3.

(g) Cognosce-
mus Deum per,
1. causam
rem, per, 2. emi-
nentiam, per,
3. remotionem
imperfectionis
nostrae & per
fidem, Dava-
nant. in epist.
ad Colos. cap.
1. 15.

(h) Si quis
Deum videat,
& intelligat
quod vidit,
Deum non vi-
dit.

(i) Humana
infirmitatis
religio, a con-
fessio est, de
Deo hoc solum
nosse quod De-
us est, ceterum
secrora illa & profunda — Mens terrena non penetrat, investigare quidem ea, perscruta-
rique pium est, sed inscrutabilia esse, & investigabilia consuetudine sunt: quorum alterum est
religiosa voluntatis, alterum imperisabilis natura, Hilari. in Pla. 129, (nobis
130.)

infinitely more of God doth remain, which will never, and cannot to all eternity, be comprehended by any finite understanding? Ah! our empty vessels are too narrow to contain this ocean; do ye ask of me (saith (d) *Augustin*) what he is; whom eye hath not seen nor ear heard, and of whom it hath not entered in the heart of man to conceive? would you have my tongue to express what my heart cannot apprehend? The modesty of the Pagan Philosopher (e) *Simonides*, may put to silence our presumption and curiosity, who being asked by King *Hiero* what God was, at first desired one day for meditation, and to deliberate and think on an answer; but, being the second time asked, he required two dayes, and after that four, still desiring the more time, because (said he) the longer I think on the matter, it appeareth the more hard, dark and difficult.

But, though we cannot (f) quidditatively and comprehensively know God, though we cannot know his nature and essence, though we cannot see his face and know him as he is in himself, *Exod.* 33. 20. 23. yet we may see his back parts, we may know him darkly and through a glasse, *Exod.* 33. 23. *1 Cor.* 13. 12. we may (g) know him as he hath revealed himself in his word and by his works; thus we may know something of his divine attributes, and thus much we may know of his infinite nature, that it (h) passeth our knowledge; thus we may know him, thus we may (i) search after his perfections, and such a measure of knowledge he hath promised to us in this state of perigrination and absence, *Heb.* 8. 11. *Jer.* 1. 34. *Hos.* 6. 3. But, since our eyes are so ready to dazzle when we look upon this bright sun, and we to mistake by applying our short and unfit measure to this infinite object, what need have we to use all circumspection and to take heed to our steps when we approach to him, with whom is terrible majesty, and of whom, to speak or conceive, even what

is true, is dangerous; *de Deo etiam vera dicere periculosa sum.* Let us then with all caution; modesty and humility, in answer to the case propounded, observe some few particulars.

1. *Concl.* Beware and take heed that thou make not to thy self any image to represent the incomprehensible nature of God; (k) mental-idols, false conceptions and unwarrantable apprehensions and representations of the infinite majesty, make way (and are thought to have given occasion) unto the pagan and popish idolatry: we are ready to mistake when we essay to apprehend the nature of Angels, of our own souls or any spiritual object, so gross are we in our apprehensions which depend so much upon the senses. Albeit our understanding and intellect be immaterial, yet hardly can we get our conceptions spiritualized and purged from those material images which it hath received from the outward senses; and if our apprehensions be so defective and fall so far short as to these finite objects, shall we be able to make suitable representations of Gods infinite nature and essence? Hence,

2. *Concl.* A good measure of that knowledge of God, whereof we are here capable, consisteth in the removing of all creature-imperfections from his glorious majesty; not only in bodies and corruptible things are there defects and imperfections, but also in the most pure, spiritual and incorruptible creatures, though they had all the perfection they are capable of, (so that their imperfections were negative and not privative) yet their best perfections are but blots and imperfections in respect of the (l) absolute perfections of God, and cannot without blasphemy be ascribed to him, till they be purged from the dross, weakness and emptiness of the creature as such, though never so excellent in it's kind: and to do this, will not be found so easie a matter as some may conceive; and without his own help and special assistance, we cannot aright know what he is, So neither what he is

lacrimum De inefas est Christiano in templo collocare, multo magis in corde nefarium est, ubi vero est Templum Dei, si à terrena cupiditate atque errore mundaetur, August. de fide & symbolo, cap. 7.

(1) *Personas simpliciter simplices.*

(k) *De Deo simplicissima & perfectissima essentia spiritualium cogitamus, omnes causas & terminos conceptus, omnes sensibiles imagines, omnia imaginabiles fantasmatia procul beamus, Voet. sci. disp. part. 1. disp. 133. pag. 245. Tale enim simu-*

(m) Non ergo. Hence (m) Austin well said, that it was no small part
parva notitia of our knowledge of God to know what he is not.

3. *Cancl.* Yet the Lord alloweth us (even in this state of absence and ignorance) a further measure of knowledge, and calls us to behold his positive perfections, his all-sufficiency, his omni-science, his omni-potence, his omni-presence and other attributes held out in the Scriptures; and his (u) name, *Jebovab*, doth most significantly express his glorious being; as also, his name *Jab*, (which seemeth to be no other then the former *Jebovab* contracted) both which come from a root that signifieth *to be*: hence also the holy one is called *I A M*, *Exod.* 3. 14. none of the creatures can say *I am*, or *I shall be*, (as the word there may, and *I* (u) think should, be

nyfius (*misgofed falſo*) *Areopagita de diuin. nominib. cap. 7. affirmat, tunc modum cognoſcendi Deum, viz. per ignorantem (ut loquitur) ſeu potius per negationem, remouendo à Deo omnia creaturarum attributa prout in eis ſunt, hunc (inquam) modum cōgnoſcendi Deum iudicat probius viſitatum eſſe meliorem, & diuina excellenſia magis accommo-*
datum: Iſte tamen negatio non eſt pura, ſed ſupponit conceptum Dei poſitum; quo ſiſtendum, viz. conceptum vniuſe generaliū & conſuium cuiuſdam entis quod necq; bonū nec Ang-
lus, &c. Sed eminens omnibus creaturis quatuor vel eſſe poſſunt. Et doctiſſimus Au-
guſtinus in Pla. 85. ſatens, ſe ſolum potuiſſe dicere quid non ſit Deus; ſupponendo ta-
men prædictum conceptum poſitum. But neither this our conſeſſion, nor what at any
time hath been ſaid by any of the learned, doth favour the dreaming Shoe-maker, *John*
Babman, while he ſaith, that God is an *infinite nothing*; he is indeed none of the crea-
tures, he is no ſuch thing, yet he is *all*; he doth eminently contain the perfections of all,
here is a clear contradiction and repugnancy (or ſhall I ſay non-ſenſe, that being ſo ſi-
milar to this empty bold man). For what is infinite muſt haue all perfection, but
what is *nothing* can haue no perfection; but this vain babler deſerves no reſutation.

(u) **יְהוָה**, *causans, ens aeternum, nomen Dei* (inquit Buxtorfius) *proprium essentiale, ab* **יְהוֹשֻׁעַ**, *alii ab יְהוֹשֻׁעַ idem. Non dubium est* (inquit Mercerus), **יְהוָה** *decuratum esse* **יהוה** *nomen tetragrammaticum יְהוָה*.

(*) מֵרֶחַק *Mercer. sum, sed rolinus & significans, Pagninus in rad. מֵרֶחַק* ero, qd
sum suavi tempore.

rendred)

hundred) wh^o they have a borrowed, finite and depend-
ing being, they are, but where were they when God laid the
foundation of the earth? and if the Lord withdraw his hand,
where are they, or shall they be? but he is the same yester-
day, to day, and for ever: He is an all-sufficient, necessary
and independent being, and all creatures being (p) compar'd,
and laid in the ballance with his most glorious majesty, are as
nothing, yea, and less then nothing, Isa. 40. 17. we have
undervaluing thoughts of God, when we make a compari-
son; all the stars must disappear, and evanish out of our
sight, when we behold this bright Sun; whatever light may
be in them, yet it is darkned at the glorious appearance of
this great Luminary; He, and only he, is the Lord who
can say, *I am, and there is none else besides me*, Isa 43. 11.

But when thus we meditate upon Gods infinite being, or
any of his divine perfections, we must not limit his incompre-
hensible majesty to our shallow apprehensions, but should
conceive his glorious attributes and nature to be far above,
and infinitely beyond what we can conceive of them. *pro-*
nost (saith *Sp*) *Seduliger*) think of God what we are not able
to think, a holy, silent, submissive admiration of what we
cannot know, should supply the defects of our knowledge;
we must not give way to our curiosity, nor labour, by search-
ing, to find out his infinite excellency, Job, 11. 7. though
in humility we should (r) follow on to know the Lord, Hos.
6. 3. yet we must not (s) stretch our selves beyond our mea-
sure, but should thankfully improve what help he doth
afford, and diligently seek after the light of the word, prai-
sing him who hath given us such a glass, wherein we may
behold so much of his majesty, untill at length we shall
know him as we are known, and see him face to face,
1 Cor. 13. 12.

4. *Concl.* As thus we may safely go where the Word doth
lead us, and follow on when we see it going before and point-
ing out the way, and may speak and conceive of God, as he
hath revealed himself in the Scriptures, So in improving
that knowledg in any ordinance, particularly, in prayer, we
may select and make use of such names, titles or attributes of
God,

(p) *Sua par-*
ticipazione no-
bis veneranda
est. in com-
parazione ejus
memoranda
non sunt, Gre-
gor.
(q) *Interest*
enim, & no-
stra ocellis,
& Dei im-
mensitatis, ea
sentire de Deo
qua senti-
re non
possumus, Jul.
Scal. exercit.
165 lect. o.
(r) *Investiga-*
re quidem
ea persequi
rique pium est,
sed insensu-
bilita esse
& in ve-
stigabunda con-
suetudine,
Hil. r. 100.
jam jam est.
(s) 1 Cor.
13. 12.

God, as are most suitable to the present performance, and may excite in our hearts that tender and holy affections which are required, and are pertinent to our call and exigence, thus, while in prayer, 1. we are confessing our sins, and accordingly would have the affections of reverence and godly fear, shame, sorrow, &c. excited, we should consider Gods majesty, justice, holiness, power, zeal for his own glory, threatnings and judgments, &c. 2. When we are asking and petitioning, and should act faith, and have our confidence strengthened, &c. we should consider Gods bowels and mercy, his fidelity and truth, his promises and tender care, &c. And, 3. when we offer the sacrifice of praise, we would meditate on his patience, his pardoning mercy, his free love, his watchfull providence, liberal hand, &c. that thereby we may be provoked to admire his bounty towards us, and proclaim his praise, and express our sense of his goodness, by walking before him in all holiness of conversation. The Book of the Psalms holds forth to us many instances of this heavenly art and dexterity, in making choice of, and fixing upon suitable meditations of God, his attributes, word, or works.

5. *Concl.* We must not in prayer, or any other ordinance, look upon God *absolutely*, for so he will be a consuming fire, and we as stubble; but we must conceive of him, and draw nigh to him, as *he is* (1) *in Christ, reconciling the world*

(1) *A modern Author affirms the divine essence or God-head in Jesus Christ* to himself, 2 Cor. 5. 19. As we cannot have the light of the knowledge of his glory, but in the face of Jesus Christ, 3 Cor. 4. 6. So, though we had it, it could not profit us, it would but astonish us, and be for our terror and confusion,

to be the proper object of all worship, alledging from Dr. Owen and some others, that the essence of the God-head is the primary and proper object of worship, Morn. Exerc. Sermon. 17. We will not now meddle with that assertion of Dr. Owens, knowing it to be maintained by many, as we shew from Franc. a S. Clara, part. 1. But we hope this Author doth not think that the God-head as personally united to Christ, is the proper object of worship, but as the God-head is in Christ under a Covenant relation, and as the head of the Church, and thus the God-head, as it is common to all the three persons of the Trinity, and not as it is in the second, only may be said to be the primary object of worship.

as the glory of Christ, coming to judge the world at the last day, will be to the wicked. But we have spoken to this head at some length; *Para. 1. Chap. 8.*

6. Concl. But in Christ Jesus we may, and should draw nigh to him confidently, as children to a father, who is able and ready to hear us. But you will say, were it not presumption to acknowledge the bounty and wonderfull condescension of God, and in prayer to follow that pattern he hath prescribed to us? or is it not rather a foolish jealousy, and most ingrate undervaluing of his tender love, yea, and a bold contempt of his authority, and a manifest transgression of his commandment, to say we will not, we dare not call him Father, while he hath said, *when ye pray, say, our Father, &c. Luk. 11. 2.* where (u) our blessed Lord teacheth us to call God, Father, not as if thereby he did point out to us the distinction, or relation that is among the persons of the trinity, or to single out to us the first, excluding the other two (for its certain, we should direct our prayers to God, who is Father, Son and holy Ghost) but to hold out to us (x) the fatherly affection, and tender bowels of God, and of all the persons of the blessed Trinity, and to encourage us to draw nigh to God with confidence, as children to a father, ready to help and pity us; and though we be not limited to the same words, or to say no other then is held forth in that pattern and copy, yet we may not change our thoughts of God, nor imagine that he hath cast off his fatherly care and affection towards us: And herein, as we have the *commandment*, So we have the *example* of Christ, he looked upon God as

(u) Nomen Patris non accipiunt pro prima tantum personae, sed utroque pro omnibus personis deitatis, apparet ex regula illa quam Forbesius ex Patribus, & communi theologorum (suffragio) proponit contra Arianos, estque ejusmodi omne nomen dictum de Deo respectu creaturæ indicat essentiam, adeoque predicatur de tribus personis.

nis simul, exceptis quæ pertinent ad incarnationem, seu assumptam naturam, & c. *scilicet* loca hæc adferre, Deus noster Pater noster, Prædestinator, Creator, Reconciliator, Adoptator, Sanctificator, exauditor precum, Forh. *infr. Histor. theol. lib. 12. cap. 12.* (x) Ostendit ad veram, & Deo gratiam orationem requiri, ut in vera fiducia oremus, ac sciamus nos invocare Deum qui in Christo dilecto suo filio nos dilexit ante facta mundi fundamenta, qui in filios suos adoptavit, ac spiritum sanctum nobis donavit, & qui patrem nostrum invocare possumus, Gerhard. in loc. cons. dæm. cap. 180.

a father, in that solemn prayer, *Joh. 17. 1. Father the hour is come, glorify thy Son.* So also, *vers. 11, 21, 24, 25.* For, though he hath another kind of interest in the Father than others, yet this doth not nullifie, and blinder our interest and relation; especially since ours is founded upon his, God having adopted us in this his beloved Son; we are truly sons, though not such sons as Christ; we are his sons, not merely nor especially by *creation*, but by *adoption*, *redemption*, and a *right* to the inheritance. And that Christ and beleevers have the same Father, and thus stand under the relation of brethren, he himself is not ashamed to profess, *Heb. 2. 11.* and *Joh. 20. 17. Go to my brethren* (saith our blessed Lord to *Mary*) *and say unto them, I send unto my Father, and to your Father, and to my God, and unto your God.* And thus the ancient Church in their prayer, *1/a. 63. 16.* ingenuit this (y) sweet relation with much confidence. Doubtless

(y) Dulce nomen patris.

then are our Father---show, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer. And as thus we have, 1. a precept, and, 2. practice, so also, 3. a promise for our warrant, *1 Cor. 6. 17, 18. Touch not the uncleanness thing, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters; saith the Lord almighty.* And, 4. this is made one end and design of the sending of the Spirit into our hearts, viz. because we are sons, and that we may know, and improve our relation by calling him Father, *Gal. 4. 6. Rom. 8. 15.* to banish fear, and to make us draw nigh in confidence and love, *2 Tim. 1. 7.*

(z) Mr. Murcot, being in great anguish, because he feared that God was not his father, had these words impressed on his mind, If I be not thy father, am I thy enemy? and again, if I be not thy father, why dost thou follow after me, Mor. exorc. Serm. 34..

But you will say, how can we call God Father, since we are not assured of our adoption? *Ans.* If God be not thy father, he must be thy (z) enemy (for there is no middle state) and how darrest thou, who art stubble, draw nigh to the consuming fire? If thou be not a son, thou hast no interest in Christ, in whom only we have access to the Father, *Eph. 2. 18 Joh. 14. 6.* And if God be not thy Father, why dost thou hing and depend upon him, yea, even then when he frowns, and seemeth to beat thee off, and drive thee away? I spake a little to the like case, *Part. 2. Chap. 2. Sect. 2.* and shall not now say much, but remember, that the Lord,

What should he not apprehend, &c.

in another case, So also in this, *(a) let us be cheerful givers, (a) 1 Cor 9:7.*
He would not have us to come to his altar, and to bring our
oblation grudgingly, he would not have his spouse look sad,
or his children to distrust his love and care towards them,
nor his servants fear, lest he were such a one as the ill
and wicked servant called him, a hard master and ill to
please, *Mat. 25. 24.* What a grief was it to *Peter* to have
his love to *Christ* questioned (*Joh. 21. 17.*) yea, though
hately he had denied and disowned him? and must it not
grieve the good Spirit of God, when we have high and low
thoughts of his mercy and kindness towards us, yea, even
then while we are constantly reaping the sweet fruits there-
of? Ah I will ye thus requite the Lord, and deal no better
with him then they? *Mal. 1. 2. I have loved you, saith
the Lord: yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us.* But if
ye will trust him, ye have his word, he will not disappoint
you; and ye do thus, as it were, engage his majesty not to
fail you: O I then draw nigh to him in confidence, and fear
not to call him *father*, who hath purchased so great an inhe-
ritance at so dear a rate for thee; *is good in some cases (as
a reverend divine said) to shew kindness upon God.* He
will never challenge thee, who hast the heart and love of a
son, for calling him Father: If thou be a child of light, though
thou sittest in darkness, yet thou art still a child, and thy
father will not disown thee if thou claim an interest in him;
what though thou blushest to call thy self a son, as being
unworthy of that relation, yet surely God hath not lost his
title, nor deserved at thy hands, that thou shouldst rob him
of that relation he hath bought by the invaluable price of
his Sons blood; and its observable, that the Saints many a
time would divide the relation that is mutual, at least are
more positive and peremptory in asserting the one part then
the other; and as the prodigal, when he had by his riotous
living forfeited his sonship, and was brought to confess,
that he was no more worthy to be called a Son, yet durst pro-
fess that he had a Father, and durst call him by that rela-
tion, and take on this resolution, *to arise and go to his father,
and say father, Luke 15. 19. 18.* So they may call God
Father,

Father, while they are convinced, and may, from an humbled heart, confess that they are not worthy to be called his sons; and even then, while their face is filled with shame and confusion, they may notwithstanding assert his relation.

But you will say, ah! should I utter a lie before God? would he not account it a mockery to call him father, while he is not our father? *Ans.* I grant there is too much presumption in the world, and too many are ready to make bold with God, and to call him father, against whom he is coming

(a) Pl. 50. 12. in wrath to (b) *tear them in pieces.* But yet if, 1. thou hast the love of a son, thou mayest come to him as a Father; if thou hast child-like affections, thou mayest have a child-like confidence. See *Part. 2. 2.* If thou hast godly fear and reverence, and high and admiring thoughts of his majesty, and art striving to give to him the honour due to his name; if thou canst answer that question, *Mat. 1. 6. If I be a father, where is mine honour?* Thou needst not fear, that ever he will question thy claim to him as a Father;

(b) Hof. 3. 5. if thou (c) *fear him and his goodness,* and art loath to offend him, though there were not a rod to correct thee; though thou shouldst meet with rods and afflictions, yet thou mightest know them to be but the corrections of a Father, and not the stroke of avenging justice. But we will not multiply particulars let us only hold out from, 1 *Job. 3.* two or three words more. This point concerning our adoption, is there laid down in the entry, *ver. 1.* and therefore, though the words be (d) *altered,* yet the case is the same that is brought to the trial to the close of the Chapter. 3. Then such as hope that God is their Father, must *purifie themselves as*

(c) *As having hope, ver. 3. abiding in him, ver. 6. being born of God, ver. 9. being the children of God, ver. 10. having passed from death to life, ver. 14.*
66.

he is pure, v. 3. they must wash and make them clean, and walk as becometh the children of such a family, they must no more be like the swine of the world, wallowing in the mire of sin; he that is born of God must sin no more, *ver. 9.* for he that alloweth himself, and continueth in the practice of any one known sin, is not of God, but of the devil, *ver. 8.* If we be the children of God, we must obey his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight,

fight ver. 22. we must deny our selves, and renounce our own will and affections, and take on Christs yoke, which (if we be his) will not be wearisome, but our relation and love to our Master, will make his work sweet and easie, *Mat. 11. 30.* 5. Such as love the Father, will love his children for his sake; such as are brethren must have some sort of sympathy with, and mutual love to one another, *ver. 14.* If all thy delight (with him, *Ps. 16. 3.*) be in the Saints, and if thou judge them the excellent of the earth, if thou delight in their society, and rejoyce at their prosperity, ye must be of one stock and kindred, and belong to one and the same family: and hence must follow that separation (as to any arbitrary and voluntary commerce with those wicked ones, to whom we are not bound by any natural or moral tie) required in them, to whom God promiseth to be a Father, *1 Cor. 6. 17.* It will be no pleasure to the genuine son to stay in the company, where his Father is reproached and dishonoured; and, O! when occasionally he is casten into the society of such wretches, with what zeal and holy indignation will his heart burn? their vile and profane words and wayes, must (e) vex his righteous soul.

(d) 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.

Is it thus with thee, O dejected Saint? dost thou follow after God, and still long and hunger for more of him, and that he would lift (f) up the lights of his countenance upon thee? and though thou still walk in darkness, and cannot see his face, yet hearkenest thou to his voice and followest after righteousness, thou needest not fear to call him thy God and thy Father; thou art allowed to claim an interest in him, and to stay upon him as thy God, *Isa. 50. 10.* Such hungry souls are blessed, *Mat. 5. 6.* and is there any blessedness without an interest in him, who is the fountain of all blessedness? yea though he seem to frown, & to forsake thee, yet the union & relation stands firm and sure, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* said David, *Ps. 22. 1.* and one who was greater then David, *Mat. 27. 46.* *Zion said, my Lord hath forgotten me.* And thus, a beleever at his lowest may maintain his claim to God; as the state of darkness, gloominess and desertion, doth noth not nullifie our relation, So

(c) *Ps. 4. 6.*

neither needs it hinder us to assert and plead it; neither did the Lord at any time challenge; nor was he grieved with a doubting believer for staying on him; and calling him Father, but rather is grieved at their jealousy, and standing at such a distance from him; who hath stooped so low to them; only to the wicked, God saith, *What hast thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth, and to plead any covenant-relation; and to call me thy God, or thy Father? Ye who have instruction, and cast his words behind you, ye may fear his severity and justice, and look upon him as a Judge coming against you to tear you in pieces*, Psal. 50. 16, 17, 22.

But you will yet say, whatever truth may be in the thing it self, yet I cannot in truth call him Father, who know not, and am not assured of my adoption. *Ans.* Thy knowledge is so far from being a ground of this thy covenant-relation to God, that it is not so much as one of its bonds and ligatures; now albeit the Spirit of Christ, who is the author, be also the keeper and preserver of our spiritual life, and of all its privileges, and of our interest in God, as not the least; yet the same Spirit hath given us an arm whereby we receive and lay hold on him, and every finger and joynt of that arm (I mean our several graces) are so many cords and bonds whereby we stay and lay hold on God, as our God and portion; and if thou see but any one of these bonds fastned on him, what needst thou fear and complain as if there were no union, interest or closing with him? say then, he is not thine by certain knowledge and perswasion; I answer, he cannot thus be said to be thine, for though thou mayest know thy relation to him (and O, if thou didst know! how sweet, comfortable, strengthening and encouraging must that evidence be?) yet he cannot be said to be thy Father by thy knowing that he is thy Father, for the object must have a being, and be presupposed to such a respect act; he must be thy Father (f) before thou know him to be thy Father; but there be some uniting graces, whereby we close with him as our Father, which though they do not confer the right of adoption, yet they bind us to our Father, and

(f) Si non
tempore, (al-
tem natura,
imo semper
tempore, si non
persuas ex im-
mediata irra-
diatione spiri-
tus, sed per ar-
gumentatio-
nem colliga-
tur; ut fieri
soler.

and are as so many cords, whereby he draws us in to himself, and whereby we close and lay hold on him; 1. then is not God thy Father, *optando, seu voto & desiderio*, is it not the great desire of thy soul to have an interest in him? and hath not this thy desire a lie in its right hand? is it effectual, operative and diligent in the use of the means, not like the desire of the sluggard, foolish, faint and lazy? 2. Is not God thy Father *confidendo, seu aliquanti spe & expectatione*; hast thou no hope, nor expectation? if thou be not assured that God is thy Father, art thou perswaded, and dost thou know that he is thy enemy? surely, if it were so, thou wouldst not thus seek in to him: Say, that thy hope is not so positive and peremptory, that it is not grounded upon *certainities* and particular promises, which thou dost apply to thy self, yet seekest thou not many promising and encouraging *probabilities*, grounded upon general invitations, entreaties, promises, which open to thee no small door of hope, and makes thee look up to God, seek in to him, and follow after him; hast thou not a *may be* and a *peradventure*? and mayst thou not improve that without presumption? thou art allowed to use a holy kind of violence, to break through all discouragements; and to lay hold on the King, as well as to take his kingdom by force, *Mat. 11. 12.* 3. Is he not thy Father *amando, seu filiali dilectione*? hast thou not the love and heart of a son? and will he prove thy enemy? 4. Is he not thy Father *adherendo, seu dependentia, adhesionem & acquiescentia*? dost thou not rely and depend upon God, and cleave to him though he frown, and follow after him when he forsaketh and withdraws from thee? dost thou *trust* in him, and cast thy self on him? dost thou adventure thy soul upon his tender bowels, free offer, and promises? art thou resolved to *(g) trust in him* *(g)* Job, 13. 15. though he should kill thee? dost thou *acquiesce* in him as the alone-fountain of all true happiness? and how small soever thy hopes be, yet with what indignation wouldst thou disdain the offer of a world to quit thy claim to, and renounce thy part in him? 5. Is he not thy Father *obtemperando, seu obsequio, conatu, opere, reverentia & honore*? dost thou

not

After what manner should we direct our prayers, &c.

(b) Luk. 15.
91.

not give him that *honour*, reverence and obedience that is due to a Father? and will he then use thee as (b) *one of his hired servants*? or reject thee as a vessel of wrath and disobedience? what? is God thus thy Father, and dost thou lay hold on him by thy *desire, hope, love, reliance and reverence*? and maist thou not in truth thus call him thy Father? hast thou those fruits and evidences of thy adoption, and findest thou those uniting graces to close with him? Be of good courage, thou needst not fear to come to him as a Father, he will welcom thee as a son, and hear and answer thy requests.

Sect. 2.

After what manner and order should we direct our prayers to the persons of the blessed Trinity?

Eph. 2. 18. *Through him we both have an access, by one Spirit, unto the Father.*

2 Cor. 13. 14. *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the holy Ghost, be with you all.*

(a) Job. 8. 9.

(b) *Vis scire naturam Dei? hoc scito quod nescias, nec in hoc contristeris quia nescias, quia & Angeli nesciunt... sed requiris a me, quomodo uno nomine res*

WHile we, who (a) *are but of yesterday and know nothing* while we poor, blind, short-sighted sinners, speak of this unspeakable and glorious mystery of mysteries, which the Seraphims and holy (b) *Angels*, do rather with admiration adore, then curiously search after, we would consider who we are, how great our (c) *ignorance* is, and how great and incomprehensible this sublime and transcendent object, of which (as (d) *Ambrose* saith) *we can know little more, but that it cannot be known*; and therefore

appellatur? nescio & libere me nescire profiteor, quod Christus voluit indicare hoc solum scio, August. de tempor. sermon. 189. (c) Lutum & vas figuli de creatore disputat, & ad naturam suam rationem non potest pervenire, & curiose queris scire de mysterio Trinitatis, quod, &c. August. ibid. (d) Hoc solum ex eo comprehendimus, quod comprehendendi nos potest, Ambros. in Symb. Apost. cap. 2. vide etiam, August. loc. cit.

should

should rather in humility be (e) believed, then curiously examined by our shallow apprehensions; narrow enquiry and halting reason: it is true, that a little knowledge here is (as (f) *Austin* saith) well worthy of the pains, but an error and mistake is most dangerous; and therefore, while in all modesty and humility we search after it, we have need to pray the blessed Trinity to anoint our eyes, that we may see what is necessary for us to believe, and that we may not be wise (g) above what is written.

Now, albeit the (h) τὸ πῶς, the manner and way, be inconceivable; yet, the τὸ τί, the thing it self, is clearly revealed; and we have here the concurring testimony of (i) all Divines, except some few contemptible hereticks; the Arrians of old, and the Socinians of late, being the most famous opposers of this fundamental article of our faith; and such a great cloud of so many witnesses may be no small support to our faith: But certainly, this glorious mystery was not revealed either to satisfy our curiosity, or to be matter of meer speculation, as Arminians seem to maintain and would make us believe. We will not now stay to confute those bold men, neither will we enumerate the several practical uses of this high point, especially since the learned Dr. (k) *Voet* hath spoken so fully and judiciously to that head in two distinct

(e) *Ubi est mentis excessus, idonea est fidei successio; mirabile ergo illud de Trinitatis unitate, de unitatis Deifica Trinitate sacramentum magis est credendum, quam exponendum, Aug. de visitat. infirmor. lib. 2. cap. 2.*
(f) *Ubi quæritur unitas Trinitatis, — Nec periculosius alibi erratur, nec laboriosius aliquid qua-*

ritur, nec fructuosius aliquid invenitur, Aug. de Trinit. lib. 1. cap. 3.

(g) 1 Cor. 4. 6.

(h) τὸ πῶς μὴ ἀπρόσφδζυ, &c. Nazianzen. orat. 29.

(i) Omnes, quos legere posui qui ante me scripserunt de Trinitate quæ est Deus, divinarum litterarum veterum & novarum Catholici Tractatores, hoc intenderunt secundum Scripturas docere, quod Pater, Filius & Spiritus sanctus unius ejusdemque substantia, inseparabilis æqualitate, divinam insinuent unitatem, August. de Trinit. lib. 1. cap. 4. Vide consensum antiquæ Ecclesiæ, omnibus Antitrinitariis pacis repudium mittentis apud Voet. sel. disp. part. 1. pag. 492. & consensum Christianismi, mediæ ætatis & modernæ, pag. 493, 494. addo etiam pag. 502. ad pag. 509.

(k) Voet. ibid. disp. 28, 29.

(1) Non facile enim quis obsecrabit, ne dum ut eximios in nobis fidem Trinitatis, figuram Filii & amorem Patris, & communionem Spiritus sancti quotidie in nobis sentiamus, confirmemus, exultemus, confestim precibus, deo-logiis, & renovatis fidei spei charitatisque amplexibus: in quo quidem sum antiqua omniū, tum horum a nostrorum concines, liturgica, deo-logia, nobis affatim praeconant: quib-

pe qua & Trinitate incipiunt, & in Trinitate desinunt, Voet. *Ibid.* disp. 26. anstid. con-
vers. Socin. (m) In his personis ordo originis est, secundum quem procedit non essentia
essentia absoluit: & in abstracto accipiendo essentiam, non essentia à persona, non persona à
essentia, non unus Deus ab alio Deo, sed una persona ab alia persona, vel alijs personis, For-
instr. hist. theol. lib. 1. cap. 35. lbes. 9. (n) Non abe hypostatical union si proper-
son, see Concl. 3. Quod habet, hoc est, excepto quod relative quæque persona ad-
teram dicitur, Aug. de civit. Dei lib. 11. cap. 10. (o) Non potest operatio esse diviti,
ubi non solum æqualis est, verum etiam indiscreta natura, Aug. contra Jem. Arrian. cap. 15.
Non naturam secimus, sed unitatem naturæ & voluntatis, & operationis confitemur, Ambros.
in symb. apof. cap. 2. una ergo in tribus divinitas, una essentia, una omnipotentia, &
quid substantiatiter potest dici de Deo, Aug. de temp. ser. 38. Si quis non dixerit Pat-
trem, & Spiritus sancti unam divinitatem, parem (seu unam ut constat ex sermone etiam)
Majestatem, Potentiam, unam Gloriam, Dominationem, unum Regnum, atque unam vol-
tatem anathema sit, *Ibid.*, ser. 129.

disputes : But we may well, with this (4) Author, elsewhere affirm, that *such as find the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of the Father and the communion of the holy Ghost, and who are daily labouring to cherish and confirm the same by prayer, meditation and renewed acts of faith, love and charity, will hardly suffer the doctrine of the Trinity to be obscured, far less will they be brought to deny or oppose it.*

But we proceed to the case propounded, in answer to which we offer in all humility these few conclusions.

Concl. 1. Albeit there be no *inequality*, no superiority nor inferiority among the persons of the blessed Trinity; yet there is an *order*, not only to our apprehension, but *real* and really: there is a natural order of *subsisting*, according to which the Father is the first, the Son the second, and the holy Ghost the third person of the Trinity; the Son is begotten of the Father, the holy Ghost proceedeth from both, but the Father, as he hath not his being and nature, so neither his subsistence and personality of any, but is *præsum* *αυτο*, he is neither begotten nor proceedeth; and according to this order of subsisting there is an *order of working*, which notwithstanding, *opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*, the works of the Trinity are (as they speak) individed, and common to all the persons, there being nothing proper and peculiar to any one, (*) except their personal properties and intrinsecal relations; and it is (o) impossible it should be

otherwise; since they are not only (p) equal in power according to the ordinary, though improper, form of speech) but have one and the same power, as the same nature, understanding, will, &c. and therefore must have one and the same work; *what things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise*, Joh. 5. 19. Hence,

(p) *Nullum
non est simile,
ita ut inaequale.*

Concl. 2. There are not three first causes, principal agents and governours, but one only; for, though there be three distinct subsistences and personalities, yet there is but one fountain and principle of action, which is one and the same in the Father, Son and holy Ghost; for the personality as such, is not the principle of action (else there would be three agents) but the divine nature, (q) power and will. And hence, 1. all the persons must work *consubstantially* and inseparably; since all have the same nature and power, which is the principle of action. 2. Every one of these glorious persons is a principal and compleat agent, because every one hath the compleat principle of action; and all the three are but one compleat principal agent, since every person hath perfectly all that nature and power that is in all the three. 3. Here then there can no suggestion nor mediation intervene, as if one person did begin, and work before, or without the other two, or as if one were a nearer and more immediat cause, then another; for, though there be an internal order, as of subsisting, so also of working, yet as to the outward work and operation, there is no difference as to its production, emanation; and dependance from all and every one of the persons; hence, as the Son is said to work *what things soever the Father doth*, so to work *likewise*, and after the same manner, *quasi* Joh. 5. 19. though then there be here an admirable order, yet no subordination, inequality, nor inferiority, no division, nor separation in working. Hence,

(q) *Non potest
jam inquirere
num potest
sia divina se
atque
formaliter di-
stinctum a quo
lunato.*

Concl. 3. That appropriation of works and attributes, so frequently insinuated in the Scriptures, and inculcated by Divines of old and late, must not be *exclusive*, as if thus what is appropriated to the Father, did not also agree to the Son and holy Ghost, or what is appropriated to the Son, might not as truly be ascribed to the Father and holy Ghost; but

D d d d

(r) because

(c) We pur-
pose not so
meddle with
the bold,
groundless and
vain speculati-
ons of the
School men
here; but if this
were not a sub-
ject that requi-
red the great-
est seriousness
and gravity,
we might go
to the popish
clergy for
matter of re-
creation; but
for instance,
we shall only
mention these
two; 1. our
learned Coun-
treymen,
John Maior
his ridiculous
reason for ap-
propriating
strength to the
Father, wis-
dom to the
Son, and good-
ness to the ho-
ly Ghost. Resp.

(inquis) propter hæreticos ponuntur divinis personis illa appropriata; quia enim inter mortales inveniuntur Patres esse Filii debiliores, putarent aliqui Patrem in divinis Filio esse impotentiorum, propterea consulto adjectum est epitheton fortis; & quia Filii non solent esse insipientes sicut Patres inter homines, ne idem de Filio. in di-
vinis existimarent, adjectum est in Filio epithetum sapientis; & quia Spiritus in modo loquendi in superbam partem capitur; dicimus enim Alexandrum Macedonem fuisse alti Spiritus: propterea vocatur sanctus vel bonus. Jo. Maior in 1. sent. dist. 14. 15, 16. quest. unica. And, 1. the great Aquinas his reason why we use not so ordinarily to pray particular-
ly to the holy Spirit as to the Father and Son, is little better, quia (inquis) Spiritus sanctus proceditque donum, cuius magis proprium est dari, quam dare, &c. Thom. in 4. sent. dist. 15. quest. 3. ad 2. (1) Under which is comprehended providence, as being a kind of continued creation, and results and consequent thereof. (2) For glorification is not a distinct work, but the perfection and consummation of sanctification and grace.

worship, and to separate these essentially united persons; but we must take heed, that we do not so appropriate any work, or divine attribute to any one, as to exclude the other two; remembering that the fountain and Author, the cause and efficient of all good, is one and the same, viz. the only wise, powerfull and mercifull (u) God, who is Father, Son and holy Ghost; and therefore all good must equally (though not after the same order and way) come from all the three persons of the Trinity: only in the work of redemption there is some thing peculiar to the Son, who was incarnate, and took on our nature, which therefore was personally united to the Son, but not to the Father and holy Ghost; and thus all Christs actions and sufferings (albeit, in them, the (x) humane nature did depend upon the providence, efficiency and assistance of God, and of all the three blessed persons of the God-head equally (for if the humane nature had been thus independent, it had not been a creature) yet these) were so peculiar to Christ, that they were not communicable to the Father, or holy Ghost, as their *subject* which they could denominate, they were not *terminatively* in, nor *causally* from these other two persons, as their nearest and proper cause; but thus they were only from, and in the humane nature of Christ, which was personally united only to the Son, and by virtue of that hypostatical and mysterious Union, they could denominate not only the humane nature, but also, by a (y) communication of properties, the second person of the Trinity; and thus the Son died for us, not the Father, nor holy Spirit.

And then, as to this appropriation of works, we would distinguish between that which was *natural*, and what was *voluntary*; we must not imagine any natural obligation lying on the Son to become our Redeemer, or on the holy Ghost to be our Sanctifier; as to the creation, albeit there did lye no obligation on God to creat the world, yet supposing him according to the counsel of his own will, and of his own free choice to have created it, the sole ground of appropriating that work to the Father, appeareth to be that natural order that is among the persons of the Trinity; for the Father did

(u) There is
only one
blessed person-
ate. 1 Tim:
6 15.

(x) Natus est
virgine non
non nisi fili-
us, & vox de
nube, tu es fi-
lius meus di-
lectus, ad sol-
us personam
pertinet pa-
tris, & in spe-
cie corporali
columba solus
apparuit Spi-
ritus sanctus,
tamen & il-
lam carnem so-
lius Filii, &
illam vocem
solius Patris,
& illam spe-
ciem columba
solius Spiritus
sancti, univer-
(a) Trinitas
operata est.

Aug. de Tri-
nit & unitate
Dei, cap. 9.
vid, etiam,
Ambros. loc.
cit. cap. 9.

(y) Per com-
municationem
idionatum.

not come under any voluntary economy and mission towards the sons of men; but the other two by a voluntary economy received, as it were commissions and a mandate, the Son from the Father, to accomplish the work of Redemption, and the holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, to begin and carry on our Sanctification, till it be perfected in glory: And by reason of this arbitrary and free economy, the works and dispensations of these two glorious persons, in reference to the salvation and redemption of sinners, do in a special manner, and upon this particular account denominate them: yet, still it must be remembred, that the actions and sufferings of the humane nature of Christ, do after a far other manner, and upon another account denominate, or have reference unto the Son of God, then any other works and dispensations which are ascribed either to the Son or holy Spirit, because of their economy towards the Sons of men. Hence,

Concl. 4. We must not, in prayer or any other part of worship, so name and direct our worship, adoration or invocation to any one of the persons of the Trinity, as to exclude the other two; for .1. that same divine nature (which many Schoolmen and orthodox Divines will have to be the proper object of worship) that is in the one, is in the other (two). 2. Because all the persons have the same power and causality, and their work is the same towards us; and why should not we look up unto, and worship all the three (2) alike? *α τοις ενος ουσιας, (said (a) Nazianzen) α τρις ισι ουσιας.* While we adore one, we must and ought adore all the three, if we exclude any of the persons of the Trinity from the object of worship, we deny him to be God: And since their names are relative, let the naming of the one lead us in to remember the other two; and thus the Apostle, while he requirerth some conditions in those who call on the Father, mentioneth the knowledge of the Son, and sanctification of the Spirit, *1 Pet. 1. 17, 18, 19, 22.* As if he had warned them in their acts of worship not so to mind the Father, as to forget the Son and holy Spirit; and accordingly the Saints, in the close of their prayers, yes, and frequently also in the beginning, (b) use expressly to mention all the three persons of

(2) *Vid. For-
bes. instr. bi-
spor. theol. lib.
2. cap. 23. ubi
vovis argu-
mentis ex
Alense &
alii, collectis
duncertam
conclusionem
confirmas.*
*Durham in
Apocalyp.
pag. 11, 12.
(a) Nazianz.
orat. 37.*

(b) *Vid. Vo-
et. (et. disp.
26. & For-
bes. loc. cit.*

of the Trinity; and though only in the close they did name those glorious persons, ascribing glory and praise to the Father, Son and holy Ghost; yet thereby they declare, that while in any part of that worship they did name any one of the persons, yet they included the other two, at least, as to their habitual intention.

Concl. 5. But though it be fit, that thus the meditation of the one should lead us in to contemplat the other two, and though we must at no time; in any point of worship, so fix our heart upon any one, as to exclude the other two from that act of worship, yet we may, upon occasion, so look upon one, as not (c) actually to meditate and think upon the other two. The limited nature of our thoughts, which cannot at one and the same instant of time seriously contemplat and be taken up with many different objects, yea, or different considerations of one and the same object; and the experience of all Saints in their meditations, doth show the necessity of this limitation: Yet, 1. that same divine nature that is in the other two, is in this case the object of worship, and therefore they being considered essentially and as God, they may thus be said to be expressly worshiped, no less then the glorious person that was named. 2. Then and alwayes there must be in us an equal respect to all the three persons of the blessed Trinity, *habitually, intensionally*, and as to the *inclination and general bent of the heart*.

Concl. 6. In singling out any one person of the blessed Trinity, we may look upon, and be directed by that appropriation of works and attributes, and the different order of subsisting and working, and accordingly fix our eyes upon that person, to whom the Scripture, in a special manner, doth ascribe those attributes and dispensations as are most suitable to our condition and the present exigence, according to that pattern, 2 Cor. 13. 14.

Concl. 7. Yet we are not so limited by that appropriation, or order that is among those holy persons, that upon any occasion we may not indifferently name, and particularly fix upon any, or that in the contemplation of them severally, we may not first fix upon any one; thus the Son is in-

(c) *Peculiari
& distincto
mentis con-
ceptu, & relj-
gionis actu
tenemus in
unam aliquam
personam, ut
eodem illo
actu tunc di-
recte & ex-
plicitè non
tenemus in
aliam... quia
preces & gra-
tiarum actio-
nes distincte
& seorsim di-
riguntur ad
Spir. sanctum
aut ad Fili-
um, aut ad
Patrem; quod
docet univ-
satis consensus
& devotio
omnium fide-
lium, Act. 7.
60 Apoc. 22.
20. 2 Cor.
13. 14. Voc.
ubi supra.
disp. 28.
pag. 478.*

(d) The holy Spirit there is called the seven spirits communi (saith *Parasus*) *metalepsi effectuum pro anima*. He is called so, not formally, but effectively, and in reference to the seven Churches, and his spiritual gifts dispensed to each of them, and since no created spirits can be the objects of worship from whom grace and peace may be asked, &c. there, these seven spirits must be the holy Ghost. See *Durham on Rev* pag. 45. (e) *Forb. loc. cit. cap. 23. sect.*

vocated before the Father, in that place now cited, *1 Cor.* 13. 14. and the holy (d) Ghost before the Son, *Revel.* 1. 4. 5. Whereby is clearly held forth to us, that notwithstanding there be a priority of order among those glorious persons, yet no priority of dignity and perfection. And thus, as we may first fix upon any one, So we may particularly make our address to any one, not expressly mentioning the other two. Thus *Stephen*, and the penitent Thief, do supplicate the Son, *Act.* 7. 59. *Luk.* 23. 42. And the Apostle doth particularly wish and ask of the holy Ghost to the Corinthians his communion, whereby they might be united, and have fellowship with Christ their Head and among themselves as members of his Body, *2 Cor.* 13. 14. And as the Spirit particularly speaketh to the Church, *Rev.* 2. 7. why may not the Church particularly speak and pray unto the Spirit? and accordingly Christians from time to time in their prayers, meditations and ejaculations, have particularly named, and fixed upon any one of those glorious persons.

But here it may be asked, whether or not, as we may put up several petitions to the several persons of the Trinity, So we may put up one and the same petition to several persons? *Ans.* Our learned antiquary (e) *Dr. Forbes* denieth this to be a fit and decent manner of worship; but, 1. if we may ask several things from them continuedly, and without interruption, as *2 Cor.* 13. 14. why may we not as well ask one and the same thing from them severally? the hazard of altering, dividing and varying the object of worship (which is the only inconvenience he objecteth) is no less in that case than in this. 2. If we may joyntly praise all the persons, why may we not joyntly pray to them? but I think none will scruple to praise them joyntly, naming all the three particularly; and it is most usual to close our prayers, ascribing praise to the Father, Son and holy Ghost for all and every one of our mercies; and may we not as warrantably pray for mercy from all those glorious persons, as to praise them for it while they give it? 3. Since, while we pray to God, we understand and include all the three persons, and must exclude none, as

hath

hath been shown, why may we not particularly name them all? 4. Is not grace and peace particularly ask'd from (f) all these blessed persons? *Rev.* 1. 4, 5. according to the interpretation of several judicious Divines. Yet, here we do not reject Mr. (g) *Durham* his caution, *Viz.* Since our imagination is ready to foster divided conceptions concerning the object of worship, it may be conceived safest, especially in publick, and before the multitude not to alter the denomination of the persons in the same petition, (in the same prayer, saith he) the generality of people being prone to imagine different objects of worship in such cases.

Concl. 8. Albeit we may thus fix our minds upon, and expressly name and direct our prayers unto any one of these glorious persons, yet as our blessed Lord, in the days of his flesh, So Christians most usually address themselves to the Father; for he being the first person, according to that blessed order that is among the persons of the Trinity, there may be several considerations inviting us particularly to fix upon him; for thus, as the first, both immanent and transient act, both (h) *predestination* and *creation* by this appropriation, is ascribed to the Father; hence, sin being a defacing of the image of God, which was implanted in man by his creation, it must in a special manner be against the Father and his work; and thus the Father having in a special manner received the wrong, to him, upon this particular account, satisfaction should be made, and reconciliation with him, and pardon from him should be ask'd; and thus Christ in his prayers, sufferings, and in every step of our redemption, did especially look to the Father; and thus the Saints also from to time time most ordinarily direct their worship to the Father, in their confessions, acknowledging his work to have been defaced by their sins, his justice provok'd, &c. in their petitions, asking par-

(f) By him which is, which was and which is to come, *Diodor. Mr.*

Durham, and not a few learned Expositors will have the Father to be circumscribed and his eternal being.

(g) *Mr. Durham*, loc. cit. pag. 12, 15.

(h) *Heb.* 5. 7.

(i) The appointing of the end, according to the order of nature, is before the election of the means, *vid.*

Twiss vind. grat. lib. 3. cap. 7. dig. 2. pag. 706.

(k) See *Mr. Shepherds select Cases* in a letter from new England, pag. (mibi) 10. 11. Albeit there

be some expressions of that pious man, which would be warily used, and which need a favourable interpretation, as, 1. while he calls the Father (as some may think) the Son and holy Ghost, the original and first cause of all good; 2. while he saith, that Christ came into the world by his death and intercession to satisfy the Father, and not the holy Ghost; 3. that we should chiefly eye the Father in our prayers, &c. *Vid. Catu. dicentem filium esse, propriam creaturam respectu personae vindicatum a Chamier. parastr. tom. 2. lib. 1. cap. 4.*

don from him, his peace and favour, &c. and in their praises ascribing to him their election, adoption, &c. admiring his wisdom and love in providing such a remedy, and so great a salvation for self-destroying sinners, &c. And this practice is conform to the constant tenour of the Scriptures of the new Testament; and albeit in the old, while the Prophets and ancient Church of the Jews call God, *Father*, they rather thus express his tender bowels and fatherly affection towards them, then any internal relation among the persons of the Trinity, yet its hard to affirm, that all that people, the most eminent and knowing among them, were ignorant of this appropriation of works and attributes, and that they never particularly eyed the Father as the first person of the Trinity; But it would be observed, while we say that the Father was in a manner primarily and most directly wronged by sin, we do not only understand *Adam's* first sin, which did obliterate and deface his image, engraven on the heart by his first work of creation, and which thus was a base requital of his bounty, of whom first in order he had his being and honour, not only (I say) did God the Father receive in some speciall manner the wrong by that first sin of man, and by our *original* sin flowing from it, but also by the constant tract of our *actual* transgressions, which as they flow from that common root in us, So they reflect upon that bright Sun which the creature at first laboured to obscure; and hence its said, *If any man sin we have an advocat with the father* (1 Job. 2. 1) as being in some speciall manner wronged thereby: yet, notwithstanding there be some sins whereby more directly offence is offered to the Son and holy Ghost, then to the Father; thus the contempt of the Gospel and undervaluing of the blood of Christ, do most immediately reflect upon the Son and his work of redemption; and the quenching and resisting of the holy Spirit in his heavenly motions, is most directly against the Spirit and his work of illumination and sanctification; hence, the Spirit thereby is said to be (1) *grieved* and (m) *vexed*. And in that unpardonable sin (or rather mass of sins) both the Son and holy Ghost are *put to an open shame*, as is expressly said of Christ, whom they crucified

(1) Eph. 4. 30.

(m) Isa. 63.

10.

offerings to themselves against, Heb. 6. 6. and it is no less evident, as the holy Ghost, whose works and gifts they abuse and undervalue, ver. 4, 5, 6. Hence it hath its name, and is particularly called *the sin against the holy Ghost*, Mat. 12. 31. Mark, 3. 29. Luk. 12. 10. Thus also notwithstanding of that appropriation of works, we will find one and the same work ascribed particularly to divers persons; thus our sanctification, though appropriated and usually ascribed to the holy Ghost, yet it is called of the Father, *Jude*, 1. and thus also our reconciliation is ascribed to the Father, 2⁽ⁿ⁾ Cor. 5. 19, 20. *Joh*. 3. 16. &c. and to the Son, *Rom*. 5. 10, 11, 15. *Col*. 1. 20, 21. *Joh*. 14. 16. *Eph*. 2. 13, 14. &c. Our (o) reconciliation is ascribed to the Father, because of his free grace he *elects* us to salvation; and to Christ, because by his death he purchased our salvation and reconciliation; and it is ascribed to the Spirit also, because it is his proper work to bring us to the Father, *Eph*. 2. 18.

Concl. 9. Albeit we do not deny, that the Father may be said to work by, and with the Son and holy Ghost, and the Son with, and by the holy Ghost, because of that natural procession, order and priority that is among those glorious persons; yet we humbly conceive, that the way of conveying of all good to the Saints, which the Scriptures so frequently inculcat, and which we should especially eye in all our addresses to God; to wit, *from the Father, through the Son, and by the holy (p) Ghost*; that this noble way doth not by any natural result flow from that original order that is among those blessed persons, but rather from that voluntary and eternal transaction among the persons of the ever glorious Trinity, for the recovery of lost man. I do not deny, that many ancient and modern Divines do speak of this order of

(n) The words themselves without a commentary do clearly hold out God the Father, though as frequently else where expressed by his essential Name.

(o) Calvinus in 1 Cor. 13. 14. ostendit quomodo dilectus reconciliari, quum offensum inimici Deo, per mortem Christi, & tamen Deum ita mundum dilexisse ut daret filium unum unigenitum, &c. Hinc, inquit, Deum inde nos intuemur, nam Deus quantum ad se dilexit ante mundi creationem; ac cum in nobis nihil carnamus præter materiam æræ, ita sit ut respectu nostri initium dilectionis sit a morte Christi.

(p) Αὐτὸ οὐ πατρὸς, διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ἁγίου.

working, as importing no more but that natural order of procession and subsisting, in reference to some operation and work towards the creatures; and having been at some pains in perusing the writings of such as seemed more subtile and inquisitive (I mean the popish (q) Schoolmen) they sent me away with less satisfaction then I came to them; here, if any where, we would beware of curiosity and rashness; and we need not be ashamed to profess our ignorance in this, as in many other points of our belief concerning this mystery; therefore, we shall in all modesty propound some few things for clearing this covenant and voluntary transaction, which seemeth so fully to explain, that which was rather darkened then unfolded by School-speculations. And, 1. it would be observed, that great (r) Basil long since spake of an *economic mission* of the Spirit, which can hardly be conceived, but in order to this voluntary transaction. 2. Its granted on all hands, that the Father from eternity did enter in covenant with the Son concerning the redemption of man, and why might not the holy Ghost be included in that covenant, in reference to his work for the sanctification and salvation of sinners? nay, he cannot be altogether excluded, unless we make him essentially to differ from the other two: now those arguments that may be brought against this transaction, in

(q) If any will be at the pains to trace the Schoolmen here, how will they see them even in their empty speculations? Their old Master, Lombard, some hundred years since, hath involved them in a labyrinth from which, to this day, they cannot extricate themselves;

sometimes they seem to affirm, that any person may send another, yea, and that one and the same person may send himself, vid. Thom. 1. part. quæst. 43. art. 8. *qualibet personæ* (Dom. Bannet. in his gloss, which is more clear then the text) *missus se vel aliam*, but when they would speak more properly and accurately, they tell us that *per missionem non aliud intelligunt nisi eternam processionem alicujus personæ divinæ cum habitudine ad opus temporalem*. And thus they maintain, that the Father is sent of none, but the Son to be sent of the Father, and the holy Ghost by both. It were an easie thing here to fill whole pages with the vain speculations of Lombard, Scotus, &c. Thomas, and others whom I have perused on this subject, to whom I went, expecting some satisfaction to this dark question from such learned men, but I found that it was lost labour to expect any solid knowledge from such luxuriant wits: and this is all they say for explaining how the Father is said to work by the Son and holy Spirit, they send us to the mission of those persons from the Father, and for explaining this, they recur to their procession from the Father,

(r) Ὁ προσεληταμεν εἰς νοτομὴν, &c. Basil apud Forbei. pag. 49.

reference to the holy Ghost, will as forcibly militate against that covenant and transaction between the Father and the Son.

3. That designation of the Son's manner of working, doth manifestly relate to his *mediatory office*, and should we not also conceive the holy Spirit to be there designed as the *comforter*, and in relation to that peculiar work which he undertook in that eternal covenant? Now that the Son is there designed, not as the second person of the God-head, but as the Mediator; and not as the *efficient*, but as the *meritorious* cause, the particle *dia* and the very phrase it self, compared with the like phrase, *Eph. 2. 18.* may evince. This is it that the Scriptures do so often inculcate, and this is so necessary to be known, and to be alwaies improved by us, when we draw nigh to God; but as to their mysterious different natural manner of working, though the thing it self and *vs. 11* be asserted, yet the *τὸ διότι καὶ πῶς*, the manner and way I know no where expressed, as being above us, and not very necessary for us to know; but all that the Scripture saith concerning the different manner of working of these glorious persons, may be applied to that gracious economy, which the Lord would have us with admiration to consider, and for our comfort improve in all our addresses to him.

4. If their natural order of working be thus expressed, then the Father and the Son may be thought to be *remote causes*, and only the holy Ghost to work *(f) immediately*. 5. The difference, as to this which is between the works of nature and grace, doth very convincingly show, that this different way of administration *through the Son and by the Spirit*, doth not relate to that natural order of working, but to this gracious economy; otherwise the works of nature, as well as the gracious habits and actions of the Saints might be ascribed to the Spirit as his work, and might be said to be dispensed through Christ, and for his sake.

That which here seemeth only to have difficulty, is, what is the fruit and special benefit of this economy, as to the holy Ghost, and what is it that thereby is superadded to that natural order of working which agreeth to him as the third person of the blessed Trinity? *Ans.* We may not

(f) Unless the particles through and by be expounded by with, as we did in propounding 9. Concl. which would make little for the purpose of these Authors;

(t) *Nulla ratio obligans vel determinans.*

think to satisfie all the cavils that carnall reason can suggest; we should suppress and not give way to our curiosity, nor labour to be wise beyond what is written; and to that question, we say no more but these two things, 1. albeit that economy be voluntary and of free choice (for who can give a reason that might have moved the Father to elect, the Son to redeem, and the holy Ghost to sanctifie any of the sons of *Adam*?) yet in that economy there is a respect had, and proportion kept with that natural order that is among these glorious persons; and here (as in all Gods wayes) there is a decency and fitness; there is a congruity, though no (t) reason or motive which could oblige and determine the Lord; for the Father, having his being of none, is sent by none, and works from none; the Son being begotten of the Father, is sent of the Father, and acts as having in a special manner received commission from him, and directs his actions and sufferings for the redemption of man unto the Father, as a price and satisfaction given to him; and the *holy Spirit* proceeding from the Father and Son, carrieth on the work of salvation in all them whom the *Father* hath elected unto life, and for whom the *Son* hath laid down his life; thus in time effectuating what the Father from eternity had decreed, and applying the medicine the Son hath purchased and prepared for us. 2. While its ask't what the Spirit worketh by virtue of this economy? *Ans.* When thou comest home to thy fathers house, and seekest his face, either thy curiosity shall be silenced, or satisfied: but now, if thou only askest what? we may rather ask what not? Are not all the gracious actings of the Spirit, and the whole work of sanctification first and last, the sweet fruit of this economy, covenant and transaction, and without which our case had been as bad and desperate as the devils? and now the Spirit by virtue of that covenant, not only works, but *creates* grace in *subiecto inhabili*, where there was no inclination, fitness, or preparation, till he began to work; and not only actual grace where he hath wrought it; and concurrereth with it, but also supplieth the defect of the cause and principle in self, which still remaineth *incomplete* till he perfect it in glory.

17; which is another kind of providence, nor what is afforded to natural agents: And holiness, sanctification and illumination, being the *third great Work* of God, which by virtue of that voluntary transaction remained to be wrought towards the sons of men, that did lie upon the *third person* of the blessed Trinity; and thus, by this eternal covenant, *holiness* was fitly appropriated to the *holy Spirit*.

And thus we may see, that there is not a full enumeration in the three-membred distinction of *mission* (so often inculcated in the Schools) 1. *per imperium*, or by *command*, which supposeth the subjection of him who is sent; 2. *per consilium*, or by *counsel* and *advice*, which supposeth weakness and ignorance in him who is sent; 3. *per originem*, or by *natural descent*, as trees send forth their branches, and this (say they) kind of mission only hath place among the persons of the Trinity; but we may doubt if any where in the Scriptures, the word *mission* or *sending*, is put to signify the natural procession of any of the persons of the Trinity? but however, from what hath been said, it may appear, that this three-footed distinction doth halt and wanteth one of its legs, yea, and that member which is most usefull and necessary, and which (as we conceive) only hath place in the Scriptures, *viz.* by *mutual consent, agreement* and *covenant*; and none can question, that this sort of mission may have place among *equals*.

Concl. 10.

Before we come to the application, let us add this tenth *Concl.* We are not so limited to conceive of the divine nature under one or more personal properties, and distinct subsistences, that in prayer, or any other point of worship, we may not draw nigh to him as the alone Jehovah and true God; we are not so obliged to conceive of the divine nature *relatively*, and as subsisting in the Father, Son and Spirit, as that we may not apprehend him *absolutely* as God, abstracting, as it were, from the different subsistences of the God-head (though not excluding them.) And thus the Jewish Church used to worship him, and for ordinary made their address to him, as that one, true and living God, laying hold, rather on his *essential* and glorious attributes, than on his personal properties or relations.

But,

(u) *A word of warning and caution.*

(x) *Una est enim Patris & Filii & spiritus sancti essentia, quam Græci ἑνὴν φύσιν vocant, in qua non est aliud Pater, aliud Filius, aliud Spiritus sanctus, quamvis personaliter sit alius Pater, alius Filius, alius Spiritus*

sanctus. Aug. tom. 3. de fid. ad Pet. diac. cap. 1. fol. 48.

(y) *Μὴνός γὰρ ἐν τριάδι τοῦ θεοῦ τὰς τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις ὡς ἀποσ. ἀπὸδ. Forbesh. loc. cit. cap. 33.*

But, (u) 1. It were to be wished now under so full a discovery of this mysterious unity and Trinity, that in beholding the infinite nature of the one Jehovah and true God, we might adore the glorious Trinity of persons; yet not suffering our thoughts so to expatiate, and be scattered in musing on three, as distinct objects of worship, but still fixing our eye upon the unity of the divine nature and God-head, which is the formal object of worship, and which is not multiplied, nor divided in the several persons; for (as (x) *Austia* saith) albeit in the Trinity there be *alius & alius*, yet not *aliud*; though there be a distinction of persons, yet not of natures, nor a distinct object of worship; but the same God-head is in all the persons, and therefore, whether one or mo, or none of the persons be named, the object of worship is the same, and we should in the unity of nature, (y) behold the admirable Trinity of persons, and in that Trinity the glorious unity of nature, without division, or confusion, multiplication, or alteration.

But, 2. Albeit we may name any one of the persons particularly, as being the true God, and a fit object of worship, yet we must not imagine any special respect and honour thereby to be given to him, as if the other two were less worshiped in that act of worship; and therefore, albeit the Saints do frequently make their address to the Father, yet, 1. they do not exclude the Son and holy Ghost; nor, 2. imagine that the Son and holy Spirit hath not an equal hand with the Father in all their mercies; and thus, 3. they do not come to the Father as another, and greater God, to whom more honour and reverence were due than to the Son and Spirit; and, 4. they do not apprehend, that thereby the Father is engaged more to help them than the other two which are not named.

3. As we should not stumble at the Arrian and Socinian cavils against the mystery of the Trinity, which is an object of faith so far beyond the reach of our dark-sighted reason and apprehension, and is such a depth, as our shallow understanding and short measure is not able to sound; So on the other hand, we would beware lest our belief of the Trinity

make

make us encline towards the pagan conceit of plurality of Gods, that it tend not nor lead that way, as too frequently it doth in the rude and stupid multitude, contrarily to the dictates of (a) reason it self, which hath convinced many Pagans (a) *Vide Scot in 1. sent. dist. 2. quest. 3.* of the impossibility of mo Gods then one; which necessary point is so clearly held forth in the Scriptures of truth, that he who runs may read, *Deut. 6. 4. Mark 12. 32. 1 Cor. 8. 4. 6. &c.*

But, hoping that sober Christians will abominat these and such like gross conceptions of God, that which we would mainly here take notice of and improve, is that gracious economy of the glorious persons of the ever blessed Trinity, in dispensing of mercies to us, and that eternal covenant and transaction whereby in time all good is conveyed to us, and which we should eye and make use of in our addresses to God. And thus we may hearken to the voice of the Father as from all eternity, saying, [How do my bowels yern towards the sons of men? I am willing to pardon all their iniquities and receive them graciously; (a) Behold I so love the World as to give my only begotten Son, that whoso- (a) *Joh. 3. 16.* ever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. I pity poor, foolish, self-destroying sinners, and I will (b) heal their back-slidings (c) with the blood of my dear Son, and will love them freely, (d) according to the multitude of my loving kindnesses.] And we may behold the Son (b) *Hos. 14. 4.* (c) *Is. 53. 5.* (d) *Is. 63. 7.* himself concurring and consenting to that blessed motion, and saying, [O! let the ungrate rebel have a pardon, though it should be subscribed with my blood; let bankrupt sinners have a discharge, and all their debts be laid on me, I am willing to lay down my life that they may live; Lo I (e) come to be the propitiation for their sins, I delight to do thy will, O Father, and to (f) give my self for them to redeem them from all iniquity, and to purifie by my blood a peculiar people zealous of good works.] And we may hear the holy Spirit saying, [Behold, I am willing and ready to tender to them the gracious offer of peace and reconciliation, to perswade and allure them to embrace that offer, and to convince and (g) draw them after thee, to (h) write thy Law in their hearts.] (g) *Cant. 2. 42.* (h) *Jer. 31. 33.*

(i) Joh. 14. 26.

(k) Rom. 8.

26.

(l) Joh. 14. 16.

hearts, to (i) comfort and strengthen them, and (k) help their infirmities, to defend and keep them from all evil, and to fit, prepare and (l) preserve them unto eternal life.] But, it would be remembred, that though virtually and as to our apprehensions, these several steps may be distinguished in that gracious transaction, yet properly there cannot be such a stipulation, such conditions, offers, consenting, and, as it were, consultation, where there is but one nature, will and understanding ; but that there was such a Covenant, having eminently these things in it, cannot be denied by any who acknowledge our salvation to be carried on according to an eternal Covenant between the Father and the Son ; and when we shall understand that *conference* and, as it were, consultation concerning the *creation* of man, *Gen. 1. 26.* we shall be more able to comprehend this transaction concerning the *salvation* of man: but now, let none from thence imagine the love of the Father to be really different from the love of the Son and holy Ghost, and that they did not contrive and had no hand in predestinating us to life, but as consenters and approvers of the Fathers free purpose of love : For, albeit predestination be ascribed to the Father by some sort of appropriation, as being (according to that mysterious order in the Trinity) the first person ; yet, we must not think that there is such a priority or distinction of persons as doth import a distinction of nature or a real difference among the essential attributes as they are in these glorious persons, and so conceive that there is another will, power and understanding in the Father, then in the Son and holy Spirit, and accordingly different acts flowing from these different principles. O ! let us not rob these blessed persons of the honour of being (m) equal with the Father, and having the same nature and divine properties, because they of their meer good pleasure have stoopt so low to exalt us and do us good ; and because voluntarily and of their free accord, they have undertaken an economy and dispensing of offices for us to make us happy ; and have received (as it were) a commission, the Son to redeem us and lay down his life for us, and the holy Spirit to sanctifie and prepare us for the heavenly inheritance, and

(m) Phil. 2. 6.

and have thus undergone a sort of (n) inferiority, dependance, and subordination, in being sent to execute these offices, which they undertook in mercy and love to us. O! who is able to (o) comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of this love of the Son and holy Spirit, which passeth knowledge? O! let us praise and magnify God the Son, and God the holy Ghost, for undertaking an economy (and, as it were, ministry) for us; now unto the ever glorious and blessed Spirit of grace; and unto him that (p) loved us, and washed us in his own blood, and hath made us Kings and a royal Priest-hood, be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen. And, O! let us thankfully and diligently improve this noble and admirable way of conveyance of all good to us, and let us in all our addresses to God desire and wait for every mercy from the Father, through the Son, and by the holy Spirit; looking upon Christ as the inexhaustible treasure and (q) store-house of all blessings; and depending on the Spirit, as the great dispenser, giver and disposer of all that fulness and riches that is in Christ; from the (r) Father of mercies and God of all comfort, of (s) whom are all things, as the fountain and first person of the Trinity, who laid the foundation of our redemption, and who is the Father of our blessed Lord and Saviour. We cannot perform any duty acceptably, we cannot praise God, nor pray to him, unless we come in the name of Christ as our Mediator and Advocate, and wait for the help of the Spirit, and depend on him as our shield, strength, leader and guide; and yet, we must look over that economy and dispensation, and close with the Father, Son and holy Spirit as that one God, to whom in every part of worship we should come, as to the chief and ultimate object, to which primarily it is directed, and in which it doth rest.

Here we will stand, we can go no further; and praise be to his name who hath brought us this length; albeit our light be darkness in respect of the light of glory, yet the light of the ancient Church was but like the morning star before the Sun (t) which now shineth before our eyes: And, O! when will that day come, when we shall behold so much in this

F f f f

mystery

(n) Inaequalitas officiorum non tollit aequalitatem naturae aut personarum. (o) Eph. 3. 18, 19.

(p) Rev. 1. 5. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

(q) Col. 3. 19. (r) 2 Cor. 1. 3. (s) 1 Cor. 8. 6.

(t) Mal. 4. 2.

mystery as shall ravish our hearts, and fill our mouths with songs of joy, admiration and praise to all eternity, when we shall not see through a glass darkly, but face to face; when we shall not know in part, but as we are known; when we shall be like him, and see him as he is, 1 Cor. 13. 12. 1 Joh. 3. 2.

CHAP. II.

Of the withdrawing of the Spirit, of deadness, indisposition, and wandring thoughts in prayer, their causes and remedy.

ALL our light and strength, our activity, life and zeal, being the fruit of the free Spirit of grace, as hath been shown, *Part. 1. Chap. 9.* We not being of our selves sufficient to think, far less to do as we ought; all our sufficiency coming from God alone; 2 Cor. 3. 5. If the Lord withdraw his Spirit, and if the Spirit of (a) life do not quicken and enable us for our duty, what deadness and indisposition must there be upon our spirit? and how unfit and unable must we be for the work of the Lord, and for any part of his worship? We shall not then here separate the cause and the effect; but we not being meer patients, but by our folly and unkindness provoking the Spirit to depart; yes, and not only thus procuring this sad dispensation, but also joyning and actively concurring, and taking, as it were, the hammer in our hands for hardning our own heart, shutting our own eyes that we might not see, and casting water upon the fire, that it might not burn, we shall enquire after both sort of causes: adding some few things for curing and remedying this evil, and for our direction while we are under this sad trial.

(a) Rom. 8.

SECT. I.

How far the Spirit doth withdraw? and why?

Joh. 6. 63. It is the Spirit that quickneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.

Phil. 5. 11, 12. Take not thy holy Spirit from me;-- uphold me with thy free Spirit.

WE shall not now speak of the case and state of *desertion* in the general, what it is, what be its kinds, what are the causes, what the symptoms and marks, what the effects and wofull consequents of that malady, and what should be done by way of cure and remedy; that were a large field, hath been the subject of several excellent (a) Treatises; but we shall only meddle with so much of that case as concerneth the present subject, and now enquire how far the Spirit doth withdraw his help and assistance from the Saints, in reference to their prayers? and shall but in a word, and very briefly speak to that, and to the rest of the particulars in this and the following Sections; because they fall in here occasionally, and as in the by, as also since they very much depend upon the case *in shew* (of which now we cannot speak) and the general grounds and purposes which belong to that head.

(a) Mr. Bolton's instructions for a right comforting, &c. Mr. Goodwins child of light, &c. Mr. Symonds's desert. souls case and cure, &c.

As to the first question here propounded, how far the Spirit doth withdraw? Let us, 1. suppose against Socinians, Papists and Arminians, that the Spirit doth neither totally nor finally leave and forsake any of the Saints, 1 *Joh. 3. 9. Joh. 10. 28, 29. Jer. 32. 39, 40. Heb. 13. 5. &c.* 2. From the constant presence of the Spirit, we may well collect his constant work and operation; there is a necessary influence of the Spirit whereby the Saints are supported and upheld, the life of the new man is preserved, and the (b) seed of God is kept from corruption; and that influence is never denied or withheld from the Saints when they are at the lowest, and in their worst and weakest condition, when they have been sadly

(b) 1 *Joh. 3. 9.*

(c) Rev. 3. 2.

buffered by Satan, and dangerously wounded by their lusts, and after that little of life which yet (c) *remaineth in them is ready to die*, yet there is a secret hand that supporteth them, so that *they shall never perish*, Joh. 10. 28. But, 3. it is more difficult to determine, whether as the Spirit alwayes worketh to the *conservation* of spiritual life, So also to its *operation*, acting and exercise (and the work of the Spirit, as to the former, may be called, *upholding and conserving grace*, and as to the latter, *assisting and concurring grace*.) Ans. Albeit we did joyn with 21. (A) excellent modern Divine, while he thus resolveth this question; *God never wholly denieth his assistance to a faithfull soul: though some degrees of divine help be withheld, so that the soul languish in a sort, and sink into a state of deadness and drowsiness, yet there is life, and thus both habitual and actual. Gods clock never stands; there is no such deliquium gratiæ, no such swoon of the new man, in which all acts do cease---though a Christian may do less, yet still he doeth something, and though he may lose some help from God, yet not all.* Albeit (I say) we did grant what is here asserted, yet these actings may be so weak and faint, that it will be hard to discern and put a difference between them and our natural motions; they may be so cold and liveless, as if no fire had come from heaven; and as if the Spirit of life had never breathed upon the soul: nay, though something of the new life, and of grace, might be discerned in those actings, yet we could not assent to what is said by this (c) Author concerning the *constant growth of grace*, unless by growth, he understand no other thing but the bringing forth, and bearing some fruit, though never so small and little; but this cannot be the importance of the word, while we are exhorted to *grow in grace*, 1 Pet. 3. 18. And thus a man may be said to grow, while he is lying on his death-bed, and while he is in the most languishing condition; for even then he can elicit some vital acts and bring forth some fruits of

(c) As the Spirit worketh alwayes to the conservation of spiritual life, so it worketh ever to the growth of grace: A Christian is

ever growing, yea, when he seemeth to himself and others to stand at a stay, yet, as Gallus, he groweth alway really, though not apparently, nor equally said, pag. 26.

life; and yet it would be thought a strange paradox to affirm that such were in a (f) growing condition: there is no proper growth, but when the habit, fountain and principle doth receive an addition and increase. But, 4. what ever be said as to a total cessation from all acts of spiritual life, and to an universal withdrawing of all assisting grace: though a Saint, under the most dreadful storms, and while he is at his lowest, were never such an empty vine, as to bring forth no fruit, and though at no time he were so far deserted, as to have all measure of assistance for every spiritual duty withheld, yet there may be a total suspension of influence and assistance in reference to some particular performance, and that it may be so in the present case, is too apparent; and thus some (g) Divines observe, that all the while David wallowed in the mire, and till he repented of his murder and adultery, his mouth was shut, and he could not pray; and therefore, after he had bewailed his sins, he begs that God would open his lips, and would uphold and strengthen him with his free Spirit; Psa. 51. 15, 12. Guilt upon the conscience will make the sinner speechless when he comes before the Lord; ah! what can the rebell say, who purposeth to go on in his rebellion? dare he say (and what else can he say) [Lord though I purpose to break thy holy commandments, and to provoke thee to thy face, yet withdraw not thy Spirit. be not angry, pardon my sin, &c.] or if any had the impudence thus to mock the holy Lord, would any imagine that the holy Spirit did help and assist him in such an hypocritical, bold and foolish performance?

And since the Spirit may thus be provok'd totally to withdraw his help and assistance, as to our spiritual sacrifice, and the offering up of our desires to God, we need not descend to particulars, for all that actual help and concurrence, with the several steps thereof (h) mentioned, Part. 1. Chap. 9. may be denied, and for a season withheld and suspended.

It would be here observed, that this suspension of the assistance of the Spirit, may fall under a twofold consideration: 1. as our trial; 2. as our punishment: For, though he Lord doth not withdraw his Spirit but from sinners, yet

(f) And the instance (of plants) under the nipping blasts of the winter when the fruit and leaves fall off) brought by the winter, overturneth his conclusion; for though then there be a tendency to growth, yet there is no actual growing, but a decay.
(g) Mr. Hilderith on Pl. 51. Mr. Love Treat. of mortification.

(h) *Vid. loc.*

337. *et seq.*

not

(i) *Causa sua
qua non, dis-
positiva imo
& meritoria*

not alwayes for sin; though we be guilty, and sin may be called the (i) cause and occasion of desertion, that which of it self deserueth this sad stroke, and makes us lyable to this sore trial (for in heaven, when we shall be free of sin, there shall be no night nor eclipses; there shall be no complaint for the want of the influences and the light of this Sun) yet the Lord doth not alwayes pursue a quarrel, and for our sins withdraw his Spirit; but for some other high and holy ends, 1. the Lord, like a *Physitian*, will take down the body, and draw blood to prevent the disease; thus the Lord did so far withdraw his assistance from *Paul*, as to suffer the messenger of Sathan to buffet him, to prevent Spiritual pride, and that he might not be exalted through the abundance of revelations, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. 2. As a teacher and instructor of his people, he will withdraw his help to teach and warn them of their own weakness and inability, and the need they stand in of a continual supply from the fountain; thus *Peter* in the hour of temptation was so far deserted and left, that he denied his Master thrice, and with an oath, *Mat.* 26. 70. 72, 74. 3. As a sovereign Lord and Master (k) *who may do what he will wish his own*, he will withdraw his Spirit for the trial of his honest servants, and to give the world a proof and evidence of the reality and strength of their graces; thus *Job* was left to Sathans buffeting from within and without, as if God had set him up as a mark at which he would shoot all his arrows, *Job*, 7. 20. so that *his soul choosed* (and had he not been by a secret hand of providence upheld, would have embraced) *strangling and death rather then life*, ver. 15. And yet the Lord all the while was not pleading any controversy against *Job*, but rather offering him to the trial, that his sincerity and uprightness might be brought to the light, and made more manifest; and that we hearing of his patience, might learn to imitate it; and seeing the issue and period the Lord put to his trial, might be encouraged in the day of our trouble, *Job*, 1. 8. *Job*, 2. 3. *Jam.* 5. 11. But, 4. though the Spirit doth not (l) alwayes, yet often, and most

(k) *Mat.* 10. 15.

(l) *Quod ad
tristum illud
Augustini:
& Prosper
Deus nemi-
nem deserit
nisi prius de-
seratur ab ip-
so. Intelligi
potest vel de
desertione ab-
soluta & finali,
vel de deserti-
one castigato-
ria ac quasi
penalis —
& si loqua-
mur de homi-
ne lapsus cer-
sum est om-
nem homi-
nem / ut lo-
quitur Did.
Alvarez de
duci. lib. disp.
Deus illum deserat,*

18. (est 7.) prius deseruisse Deum per peccatum actuale vel originale quam
usually

usually he withdraweth for sin, according to that threatening, 2 Cor. 5. 2. *If ye forsake him, he will (m) forsake you.* Our kind Father will withdraw and hide his face from his own children when they become unkind and ungrateful, and then desertion is a *paternal chastisement* and castigation, and an (n) act not of meer sovereignty, but rather of justice, though not pure and vindictive, but rather paternal and castigatory, and mixed with much love, and tending to our good profit and amendment, *Heb. 12. 10.* And thus there are, as it were, four kinds of subtractions and withdrawings of the influence of the Spirit, *viz.* 1. *medicinal*, cautionary, and for preventing of sin; 2. *monitory* and doctrinal; 3. *probatory*, exploratory and for trial (albeit the former two also in some general sense may go under this name, and be said to be for trial, which thus is opposed to punishment, which falls under the last sort of desertion, which is) 4. *castigatory*, and, as it were, penal, and by way of chastisement for sin: we will not further prosecute the difference; let us only observe, that as it is more honourable and comfortable for the Saints to be cast into this furnace, then to cast themselves into it; to suffer according to the will of God, then for their sin; So usually there is some one or other circumstance and ingredient in the trial it self, that hath much love in it, or is some kind of mitigation and extenuation of that sad stroke, or some thing in the issue for the greater advantage and establishment of such as have been under the trial; thus *Paul*, though buffeted by *Sathan*, yet not foiled, but keeps his ground; though he was left to wrestle with the temptation, yet not to become a prey to it; and though *Peter* fell foully and most deplorably, yet he was not left in the mire, but instantly recovered by *Christ's* look; and though *Job's* trial was very sore, yet the issue was very glorious and comfortable.

But though the Lord thus may for holy ends (known to himself, but alwaies for the good of his honest servants) withdraw his Spirit in some measure from these, who have not by their negligence or folly procured it, they being most regular and exemplary in their walk, yet, 1. since most usually the Lord withdraws for sin; and, 2. since we alwaies deserve

(m) Not in respect outwardly, but in respect of inward and sanctifying grace, withdrawing both the one and the other.
(n) But rather negative, when positive, and if we would speak strictly, it is rather the suspension of an act; but in that is doth flow from the holy counsel and appointment of God, we may in respect of its original, seu casualiter, call it an act ut loquimur cum vulgo.

How far the Spirit doth Withdraw;

deserve, and may (if the Lord would deal in justice with us) by our failings provoke the holy Spirit to depart and forsake us; and, 3. Since the Lords high and holy ends and designs are secret, and cannot well at the first view be discerned by us, therefore it is alwaies our duty, and should be our work, when we meet with straitning, deadness, &c, (which are the symptoms of the Spirits withdrawing) to search after our waies, and to examin our hearts, that if our conscience condemn us not, we may be comforted; or having found out the cause, and the particular sin for which the Spirit hath withdrawn, we may repent and forsake it; but we would not rest on a superficial view of our waies, nor because we cannot at the first discern, therefore conclude there is no cause in us; but let us, according to *Elisha* his counsel to *Job*, say unto God, *that which I see not, teach thou me*, *Job* 34. 32. Let us impartially deal with our own heart, and ask conscience, and set it a work; let us again ponder our waies, and let our enquiry be more particular, and of a larger extent, and readily we will espie one of the following causes to have procured and brought on this malady, and will perhaps be forced with him (o) to say, *Lord thou didst not leave me till I first left thee.*

(o) Tu me non
deseris, nisi
prior ego te
deseram, Au-
gust. som. 9.
soliloq. cap. 14.
scl. (mihi)
166.

And thus we come to the second thing propounded; what are these sins for which the Spirit is provoked to withdraw and forsake the Saints, and not help them in prayer, or any other spiritual performance; at least not in such a measure or maner as formerly? But it would be remembered, that this question must be limited to the fourth and last case, viz. when the Spirit doth hide his face for sin, and when our iniquities separat between us and our God, as *Isa*. 59. 2. For in the three former Cases, when the Lord for our trial, and for high and holy ends known to his majesty, doth depart, albeit then it be our duty to search and enquire whether by our folly we have procured that stroke, that seeing our fault, we may amend our waies, and how ever we may walk more closely and circumspectly, and follow after him while he withdraweth from us; yet then no such cause can be discerned and found out, because (as is supposed) the Lord in that

How far the Spirit doth withdraw.

that dispensation doth not pursue a quarrel against us, 2. We would distinguish between the comforting presence of the Spirit, and his quickning and strengthening presence; there may be much life, vivacity, activity, fervency and heart-melting in prayer, or any other ordinance, when through the want of assurance the Saints may mourn and pour out many a sad complaint before the Lord; now albeit both those cases belong to the general head of desertion, and have some place here in reference to prayer, since our enlargement in that duty doth not a little depend upon, and might be much promoted by, the assurance of our adoption, reconciliation, and God's favour; yet, since there heedeth nothing be here added to what belongs to the general case, we shall remit that part of the question, that concerneth the comforting presence of the Spirit to its own place, and now only speak of the causes why the Spirit withdraws his help and assistance; especially since the causes and cure both of the one and the other, will be found the same and alike, if not altogether, yet for the most part; as the Spirit useth to withdraw his comforting, when he withdraweth his quickning presence. So what means would be used for recovering the quickning, may also prove instrumental for regaining the Spirit's comforting presence, albeit the one may precede the other, and the Spirit may for awhile quicken and assist before he comfort.

Before we descend to particulars, it would be observed, that the holy Spirit may be provoked to depart, 1. more directly, immediately, and by way of affront, as when any indignity is immediately offered to his majesty and holiness, or to his work; 2. mediately (as in law) and indirectly, by way of desertion, when through our folly we transgress any of the commandments of God, and thus more directly sin against him as Law-giver, King and Lord, rather than as our helper and comforter. And here we shall especially speak of the (p) first sort of causes, as being most proper to this place, reserving the other to the following Section.

As to the first, the Scripture holdeth forth the unkindness, affronts and indignities offered to the Spirit of God under several expressions, as of, 1. (q) *grieving*; 2. (r) *griev-
ing,*

(p) Yet not excluding the second, nor denying its influence in these provocations.

(q) 1 Thess. 5. 19.

(r) Eph. 4. 30.

- (f) Isa. 7. 13. *sing*, 3. (f) *wearying*, 4. (z) *provoking*, 5. (u) *tempting*, 6. (x) *resisting*, 7. (y) *taxing*, 8. (z) *rebellious*, 9. (u) *against*; and, 9. *doing* (a) *despise unto the Spirit of grace*, (x) *Act. 7. 51.* We will not enter upon an explication of these phrases, nor particularly enquire after their importance or difference, but we may at the first view take notice of some kind of gradation from the less to the greater, for the most part, if not in all, according to the order they are here placed; and albeit there must be an inequality, for according to the measure and degree of the offence, the provocation must be the less or the greater, yet all and every one of these indignities in whatsoever degree doth deserve, and may justly provoke the Spirit to depart; but we shall now only instance some few particulars, as being the most ordinary and the epidemical distempers of this generation; and we shall name them as so many branches of the first head, *viz. quenching the Spirit*, which being most general, may well be extended to the several particulars.

(b) That we may improve the metaphor and similitude used by the Holy Ghost.

As (b) fire may be quenched, either by with-holding fuel and matter whereon it should feed, or by casting water upon it, to choak and extinguish it; so the Spirit may be said to be quenched, either *negatively* by not cherishing, or *positively* by opposing and abating his office or work; either by *omission*, or by *commission*. 1. Then negatively, the Spirit may be quenched these three manner of waies; 1. by not opening to him and yielding to his motions; thus while Christ came to the spouse door knocking and crying, *open to me my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled*, &c. She holds him out, pretending trifling excuses, for her folly and unkindness; *why? she had put off her coat, and could not put it on, she had washed her feet, and would not defile them*; therefore Christ withdrew his Spirit and departs; and when she (saying to herself, and repenting of her folly) sought him, could not for a while find him; she called, but he gave her no answer, *Gen. 5. 2, 3, 6.* Thus also while the Spirit of God *cried to Israel*, and they would not hear; and *resisted to him*, both by his servants the Prophets, and by his motions and inward suggestions, but they would not hearken nor

obey, he withdrew, and gave them up to the lusts of their own heart; since they would not follow his counsel and directions, he left them to themselves and to follow their own counsels, P/s. 81. 8. 10, 11, 12, 13.

But, secondly, though the spouse be not so incivil and unmanly as to hold Christ at the door, yet if she do not welcom him and give him entertainment suitable to his worth and kindness, his Spirit will not stay; if thou dost not make ready, and prepare the heart to receive him, he will not stay in any other room, if the affections be not enlarged and roused up, to wait and attend him, he doth not value the empty complements of the fancy and imagination: if the will, which is the mistress and supreme, do not welcom him, he regardeth not the attendance of the inferiour faculties; if thou be in a spiritual lethargy, when the Spirit cometh to visit thee, if thou meet him with a dead and dull (c) heart, (c) See Ser. 2. if thou be fearless of his terrible majesty, if thou keep not a due distance, casting off that filial reverence, and tender respect which is due to so great and compassionate a Lord, he will depart and forsake thee, *res delicatula* (saith an ancient) *of Spiritus Dei, & ita nos trahat sicut trahatur*, the Spirit of God is tender and sensible of all the affronts and injuries we offer to him, and will deal with us accordingly; if we dishonour him, he will afflict us, and lay us low; he will go away, and then our (d) glory departs; if we do not welcom the Spirit with the whole heart, and entertain him with suitable and enlarged affections, he valueth not our empty profession and vain oblations: Luke-warm Laodiceans will be spued out of his mouth, Rev. 3. 16. these who would not (e) open their mouth wide to receive his comforts, shall have their heart filled with his terrors, and shut that it shall not receive his influences.

But thirdly, though there be not a total deadness or laziness, though there be some life, activity and diligence, yet if there be a decay of love and zeal; if we do not so cherish and entertain the motions of the Spirit as formerly, this may grieve and quench the Spirit; if love wax cold, and if there be a decay of respect and affection, that will bring on some

(d) If the glory departed with the Ark (which was but a symbol of Gods presence) 1 Sam. 4. 21. for rather when the Lord himself departs.

(e) Pl. 81. 10.

sort of distance between married persons, and will hinder friends from conversing so frequently and familiarly together; and for this the Lord threatneth not only to remove the presence of his Spirit, but also the candlestick and outward ordinances (which were the means of conveyance of the Spirit) from *Ephesus*, Rev. 2. 4, 5. *because thou hast left thy first love, &c.*

(f) A & B.
9. 19.

As the Spirit may thus be quenched negatively, and by omission, So, 2. positively and by commission; asy 1. when we prostitute and subject the gifts of the Spirit, his work and interest to our selfish and carnal ends; desiring a name, and taking up a possession of godliness, that with (f) *Simon Magus*, we may seem some body; when we make piety a cloak to cover our pride, covetousness, &c. or use it as a stirrup whereby we ascend to some high place and station in the world, &c. 2. When we have low and undervaluing thoughts of the gifts and graces of the Spirit; though they have some room in our estimation and affection, yet if we prefer other things unto them, not prizing them according to their worth and excellency, nor regarding as we ought the condescension and kindness of the giver, we dishonour and grieve the Spirit, and he may justly take away those love-tokens; thus when we will not lose our favour with man, our moyer and interest with the creature, our name, place and possessions for his truth, ordinances, &c. yea, when we so far undervalue these precious things, as to be ashamed of them before men, when not only *fear*, but also *shame* will make us dissemble our profession. and conceal our graces, duties, &c. may we not be afraid, lest, as the (g) *Son will be ashamed of such* when he cometh in his glory, so the Spirit when he cometh to manifest himself in the ordinances of life. But, 3. when not only his gifts and graces, his love and his kindness are undervalued, but also his commands and authority are despised, his motions and sweet insinuations are choaked and opposed, while as the contrary suggestions of *Sathan* the enemy, are entertained, cherished, and cheerfully obeyed; must not the Spirit be much displeased, and highly provoked with such an indignity? would an earthly King endure

How far the Spirit doth withdraw.

endure such an affront? nay, what friend is he who seeing thee but slight his counsel, entreaty and request, while thou didst welcom his enemy, and gratifie him in what he desired, could digest such a disparagement and indignity? And, 4. so much of illumination (which is the work of the Spirit) light, knowledge and conscience is choaked and opposed by the sinner (whatever be the particular transgression) so far the Spirit is dishonoured and disparaged, and provok't to depart and withdraw, nay, in every formal disobedience, viz. when the command and counsel of God is known, there is much, not only of contempt, but also of rebellion; and what will provoke if that do not? And thus albeit for distinctions sake we did put a difference between sins, some of them being more directly against the Spirit, his work and office, that being, as it were, their *object*; yet there is no known sin which may not be said to be against the Spirit of God and his work.

And thus we come to the second sort of provocation, whereby the Spirit is not so directly opposed and quenched, his peculiar office and work not being the matter and object of such sins (albeit it be (b) opposed and choaked by the sinner) and here we have a large field if we would come to particulars, but *the (i) works of the flesh are manifest*, and their opposition and contrariety to the Spirit of grace and holiness, is no less evident, Gal. 5. 16. If we (k) fulfill the lusts of the flesh, we cannot walk in the Spirit; the Spirit will not abide with us, nor direct our steps; for what concord can there be between light and darkness, and the Spirit of holiness and the spirit of lust? As Doves leave their place when it becomes neisty and unclean, So the holy Ghost (who in the likeness of a Dove descended upon Christ) will not lodge in that heart that is defiled with filthy lusts, and is (l) become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Every reigning sin is another Lord, and takes up the house, and the Spirit will not dwell in a corner, nor (m) cast in his lot with another lord and master; yet some do drive the Spirit farther away then others, the more gross, crying, scandalous and conscience-walking the sin is, the more the Spirit is grieved, and

(b) *The work of the Spirit is thus opposed, quasi in obliquo, indirectly, and as a concurring circumstance; but not in recto & quasi objectum.*

(i) Gal. 5. 19.

(k) *The opposition will be more clear if the words*

in manifestis be understood imperatively do not fulfill, with Beza, in his translation which Marcus interprets of, albeit in his Commentary, he reads them indicatively non per faciem.

(l) Rev. 18.

(m) Prov. 1.

14.

How far the Spirit doth withdraw.

and the distance becometh the greater ; if *David* (though otherwise a man according to Gods heart) fall into murder and adultery, it will cost him many a tear and prayer before he recover the comforting presence of the Spirit ; and his bones must be broken , and the Spirit come against him as an enemy , before he prove a healer , and pour in the *oyl of gladness* in his wounds , *Ps. 51. 3, 8.* And its observable , that this penitent doth first pray that God would create in him a clean heart , and renew a right spirit within him , *ver. 10.* before he beg the presence and joy of the Spirit , *ver. 11, 12.* thereby intimating , that the Spirit will not dwell in an unclean heart ; as he had found by his sad experience all the while he continued in his (*n*) *impentence.*

(*n*) For *impentence* is both a continuation and some sort of justification of our sin.

Thus you see the cause , and if ye find the wofull effects of the Spirits departure , O ! its high time to consider your wayes , and to repent of your evil doings , and to seek the Lord till ye find him ; this is no state to be rested in ; ah ! what stupidity , security , folly , ingratitude and contempe must it be to sit down content , while thy God , thy husband , thy life and happiness is departed ? *ye have taken away my gods* (said *Aticah* of his idols) *and what have I more ? and say ye unto me , what aileth thee ?* *Judg. 18. 24.* Ah ! shall he weep , cry , and so bitterly lament the loss of a supposed deity , and happiness expected from its presence , and shall not we lament when the true God , the fountain of real happiness is departed , or rather when through our folly and unkindness we have banished and driven him from us ? O , lay to heart thy loss ! thy fruitfull vineyard is now become a barren wilderness , thou , who formerly wast a (*a*) *garden inclosed* and fenced , art now laid open to all the beasts of the forrest ; thou , who once hadst a (*p*) *fountain of living waters* , how are thy streams now cut off ? (*q*) *thou whose plants were an Orchard of pomegranats , with pleasant fruits , and whose pipes did flow out , while the north and south Wind did blow upon thy garden* , art now become as the (*r*) *mountains of Gilboa* , upon which neither dew nor rain doth fall , nor fields of offerings . Thou , who (*s*) *wast fair and pleasant for delights , when the King wast hold in thy galleries* , art now become black

(*o*) Cant.

4. 11.

(*p*) ver. 15.

(*q*) ver. 13. 16.

(*r*) 2 Sam. 1.

21.

(*s*) Cant. 7.

6. 5.

black and pale, while thou livest as a widow in solitariness, and art suffered to wallow in the mire; when thou art (1) stripped naked of all thy ornaments, and left in a dry and parched land, where there is no water; now thy (2) gold is become dim, and thy visage darker than a coal; thou, who wast fed with manna from heaven, and didst (3) eat the honey with the honey-comb, maist now cry out, my leavess, my leavess, while thou pinest away for want of the heavenly influences. Oh! who can enumerat the several evils that befall him who is forsaken of God? nay, though thou wert a Saint (and to such only we now speak) and though the Spirit did not totally withdraw, yet he may so far leave thee, that to thy sense and apprehension thou may'st appear to be (4) stripped naked, and so as in the day that thou wast born; (5) where are thy comforts and spiritual consolations now? where is thy furniture and strength, for doing thy duty? where is thy armour and shield? now thou art exposed to Sathans fiery darts, to the snares of an alluring and tempting world, and to the raging and impetuousness of thy lusts, which seemed (and were in great part) mortified and subdued. The Saints themselves, when the Spirit withdraws, are ready to fall, 1. upon the least temptation; 2. into the most gross and vile sins; and, 3. without recovery, and to live and die in that filthy puddle; unless he return (as certainly he will do to his own for his great names sake) awaken them, and pluck them out of the snare; *Peter, David, Solomon, &c.* are sad instances of the frailty, and naughtiness of the strongest Saints, when left to themselves; 1. how long did *David* lie in that vile sin of adultery without repentance? and, 2. with what craft and policy laboured he to cover it? and when other covers would not do the turn, he added to his adultery murder, committing that crying sin with much deliberation, and afterwards rejoiced in the death of his faithfull servant *Uriah*, which he had so cunningly plotted and contrived. 3. Did not *Peter* once and again deny his Master, and relapse into the same sin? yea, and, 4. did he not fall where he seemed to be strongest? his zeal for his Master, his courage and resolution appeared to be very great, when

when he protested, that though all should, yet he would not deny him, *Mat. 26. 33. 35.* and yet at the voice of a devil he denied him thrice, with an oath and cursing; the unbelief of *Abraham* the father of the faithful, *Gen. 12. 11, 12.* The passion of *Moses*, the meekest of men, *Numb. 11. 15. Psa. 106. 33.* The impatience of *Job* the pattern of patience, *Job, 3. 3. Job, 6. 8, 9.* are manifest evidences, that the strongest Saints may fall into those sins that are contrary to the graces in which they are most eminent. And, 5. they may be so far forsaken, as to be permitted not only to commit, but also to justify and plead for their sin, and with *Jonah*, to say they did well to be angry against God, for exercising mercy and forbearance towards others, and for removing their gourd, *Jon. 4. 9, 10. &c.* But particularly as to the present case, the spirit of prayer and supplication may be for a season totally withdrawn; but though the Saints be seldom laid so low, yet there may be a partial departure accompanied with many sad effects, which may easily be discerned, if we reflect upon the several fruits of the Spirit (mentioned, *Part. I. Chap. 9.*) and those infirmities which he helpeth and removeth; if then, 1. thou dost not so prepare thy heart to seek the Lord, if, 2. thy ends be not so pure and spiritual, if, 3. thou art unwillingly drawn (as it were) to the throne, rather by the enforcement of conscience, then out of love to the duty; if, 4. thou pray not so frequently, nor, 5. so fervently and feelingly, nor, 6. so confidently, nor, 7. with such complacency and delight, if, 8. thy communion with God in this ordinance hath not such influence upon thy heart, to warm and quicken it, and so engage it for the Lord, and against sin, as sometimes it hath had, &c. it is an argument that the Spirit hath in part withdrawn. Its true, the most watchful and zealous Saints, do not always and without interruption enjoy the comforting & quickning presence of the Spirit; the wind doth not constantly blow after one & the same manner upon the most fruitful garden, & therefore we must not measure our state by some present indisposition, unless there be some notable, considerable and abiding decay and abatement of our spiritual life; but when that is observed,

ved we have reason to mourn, and to lay to heart our loss, and the greater and more eminent and longer continued, we should be the more affected and sensible of this evil; what a misery and sad judgment was it to *Samson* and *Saul* to have but the common gifts and operations of the Spirit removed from them? (for as we may suppose *Saul* never to have had, So *Samson* never to have been totally deprived of the saving and sanctifying presence of the Spirit) we may read their lamentation, *Jud. 16. 28. 30. 1 Sam. 28. 15.* And what is the chiefest measure of gifts and common priviledges and excellencies, in respect of the least portion and degree of grace? Ah I do not then sit down content when the breathings of the Almighty are withdrawn, but go and cry to the (n)orth wind to awake, and to the south wind to come and (o) blow upon thy garden, that the spices thereof may flow out; go in faith, ye have a promise for your encouragement, the Father will give the holy Spirit to them that ask him; *Luk. 11. 13.* We will not insist on directions, but reserving those in great part to the following Section, let us now remember, that if the unclean spirit return after he hath been cast out, and find the house empty and swept, he will enter in again and lay claim to his former possession, *Mat. 12. 44.* Nay, though the house be not totally desolate, yet so much room as he findeth empty, he will seek to possess, so far as the Spirit withdraweth, so much the nearer *Sathan* approacheth; if the Spirit withdraw his holy motions, *Sathan* will improve the advantage, and will fill the heart with vain, idle, impertinent and sinful motions; as *Pirates* may easily surprize the ship, when the Pilot is gone, So having entered it, and finding it empty, they will not fail to loaden and fill it with their trash and stollen wares.

(n) Cant.
4. 16.

(o) If the
wind blow
not, thy ship
cannot come
to the haven,
but being suf-
fered to and fro
by contrary
tides, is left to
be a prey to
pirates.

et alia (a)

H h h h Section.

Sect. 3.

What may be the cause of that deadness and indisposition, and those wandring thoughts that arise in the heart upon the Spirits departure? and what course should be taken for removing this evil, and for recovering and maintaining the presence of the Spirit, and a praying frame and disposition.

Plu. 81. 11, 12. But my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me; So I gave them up unto their own hearts lust, and they walked in their own counsels.

Hol. 4. 11. Whoredom and wine, and new wine take away the heart.

IF the Sun be set, and leave our hemisphere, it must be night with us, and darkness must cover the face of our earth; if the soul be separated from the body, the man must be dead, and coldness must seize upon the lifeless carrion; So, if the Spirit, which is our Sun and life, depart, what darkness, deadness and emptiness must be in the soul? But, as if it were too little to be dead and destitute of life, foolish sinners will kill themselves, and harden yet more the heart, which already is harder then the adamant or flint; and when the sun goeth down, they will shut the doors and windows, yea, and pull out their own eyes that they may not see; and thus as Beduicks, in respect of a total privation of life, are said to be *(a) twice dead*. So the Saints themselves, many a time, in respect of their partial deadness, and the gradual departure of the Spirit of life, may be said to be *twice hardened, blinded and indisposed for duty*. Not only doth sin provoke the holy Spirit to depart (and thus morally, and by way of demerit, it stops the fountain of life) but also by its poison and venomous nature, it doth pollute and infect the heart, it leaveth such a blot and tincture upon the soul, as disposeth it for blindness and deadness. Sin is not only of it self, and

formally

(a) Jude, 12.

formally opposit to grace, but it maketh upon the heart, as it were, *efficiently* such a contrary impression to grace, and *materially* indisposeth it for a communion with God and spiritual exercises; and thus stealeth and taketh away the heart, *Hof. 4. 11.* And albeit every sin hath more or less of this malignant quality in it, yet their be some sins which in a special maner do produce this wofull effect, after which we shall now enquire, having in the preceding Section spoken of the former head, *viz.* of the withdrawing of the Spirit, and of these sins which did most directly and immediately bring on that sad stroke; but there being such a connexion between our deadness and the departure of the Spirit of life, and the causes and cure of (b) both those evils being much alike, and the same; we may without any culpable confusion here speak to those joyntly, especially since we referred to this place one sort of those (c) causes which did provoke the Spirit to depart.

(b) *Viz. of the withdrawing of the Spirit, and of our deadness and indisposition for duty*

(c) *Viz. those causes which did not so directly, and by way of indignity and contempt of his office and work, but rather undignely, and by way of dishonour, provoke the Spirit to depart.*

(d) *Levit. 14:*

44. 45.

(e) *Rom. 7.*

Before we speak of the remedy, we will search after the causes, which we shall rather name, then enlarge and insist on at any length: First, then as to the causes of deadness, indisposition and wandering thoughts in prayer (for all these cursed branches may spring from one and the same root, and may be cured by the same remedy, which therefore we will not separat in this enquiry) some of these are *external* and without us, others *internal* and within us, or proceed from us, and among these some are *natural* which we cannot totally remove (till this our house, (d) infected with that fretting leprosie, be broken down, and till we cast off this (e) body of sin and death) albeit by watchfulness and the diligent use of the means, we may guard against their prevailing; but other causes are more *voluntary*, and occasioned by our sloth and negligence, or some inordinate affection and lust; again, some of these do provoke the Spirit to withdraw and to smite us with a *judicial stroke*, but others of these causes do of themselves (in a special manner) *indispose the heart* for spiritual duties, and cast the soul into a sort of lethargy and deadness.

H h h h a j

1. Then

1. Then as to the external causes, we will not reckon the Spirit of grace as one; for albeit upon his withdrawing, this evil doth follow; yet it is not his work, nor is he the proper (f) cause of it, while he suspends his gracious influences which would preserve life and heat in the affections, which otherwise of themselves (like water when the fire is removed) will return to their native coldness.

Neither, 2. can the (g) world be properly called a cause of this malady; for if there were no venome within us, we would suck no poyson from its flowers; yet, in that it ministereth fuel to our lusts, it may be called a *material* and occasional cause; and albeit the creatures do keep their station and primeval perfection, groaning and travelling in pain when they are abused by degenerate man, and employed against their Maker, *Rom. 8. 22.* yet through our wickedness we make them, and they now become to us wofull snares and temptations.

Neither, 3. can (h) wicked men be said to be the true cause hereof; for though, by their ill example, society, persuasion, &c. they may ensnare us, and draw us away with them to sinfull courses, which may provoke the Lord and harden our heart, yet they can have no direct and immediate hand herein, since they have not access unto, nor influence upon the heart.

So that, 4. Sathan is the only true and most proper external cause of our indisposition to pray, deadness and wandering thoughts in prayer; he being alwaies ready as a father to begot and as a nurse to dandle, and bring up such an off spring to the dishonour of God and our hurt and mischief, that he may either make thee weary of praying, or God (i) weary of thy prayer, and that thou mayest provoke him either not to answer, or to answer thee in wrath; when we are at prayer Sathan is most busie, we may expect to find him as (k) *our right hand to resist us*; there is not a petition we offer up to God, but is contrary to his interest and kingdom, and therefore (as on saith) *maxime infidatnr orationibus fidelium*, his main work and design is to cheat us of our prayers; he is that fowl that is alwaies ready to catch away any good motion

(f) Removes
prohibens non
est proprie
causa, nec per
se influat in
effectum.

(g) Not the
world, but
worldly-mind-
edness and
our lusts that
are.

(h) Though
sin wicked
men cannot so
properly be
called the
efficient, yet
their society,
example, &c.
may be reck-
oned among
the moral and
formal causes,
as afterwards
here; Cause
24.

(i) *Isa. 1; 24.*

(k) *Zech. 3. 1.*

What may be the cause of that deadness, &c.

motion that is in the heart by the Word and Spirit; *Mat. 13. 14, 19.* and when his suggestions cannot do the turn, he will offer temptations and distracting objects, to steal away the heart, or will by his instruments raise some tumult to disturb and divert us, as *Act. 16. 16, 17.* O! what need have we then not to separate what the Apostle hath conjoynd, *1. Jam. 4. 7, 8.* and to watch against and resist the devil, *When we draw nigh to God.* But though he be strong, and hath many advantages, yet (1) Stronger is he that is in us; and if in his name and strength we carefully resist him, he will flee from us; ver. 7.

(1) 1 Joh 4:4.

O! but the chief and main cause is from within, this disease flows from our own bowels; no infection nor contagion from without could harm us; were there not a distemper and many ill humours within; neither Satan nor his instruments, nor the allurements of the world could make us halt in our way to heaven, were we not cripple and maimed in our own feet.

The first then and mother cause, the womb where all the other were conceived; and the root that sendeth sap to all the branches, is our original, natural and hereditary corruption; that old man and body of sin, that enemy to God and all righteousness, which lodgeth in the best Saint while on earth, and which never is so far subdued and tamed, but if we be not upon our guard, it will be ready to interpose and to hinder us in all our religious performances; this is that Law in the members rebelling against the Law of the mind, whereof *Paul* complaineth, *Rom. 7. 21.* This is that flesh that lusteth against, and is contrary to the Spirit, *Gal. 5. 17.* this is that bias that leadeth us away from, and makes us turn aside when we are following after, the Lord; and hence proceedeth that natural levity and slipperiness, that instability and unstaydness of our spirits, that we can hardly fix and dwell long upon any spiritual object, and that good motions are not so well rooted and abide not so long with us: hence wandering and impertinent thoughts break in, and that restless sea within still (m) *casteth up mire and dirt*, to be a rub in our way when we are looking to the sight mark. Hence

(m) Isa. 57.
10.

Paul

What may be the cause of that deadness, &c.

Pauls complaint, (and where is there a Saint that may not joyn with him) *When I would do good, evil is present with me—O Wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. 7. 21. 24. O! what need have we continually to watch over these vain, instable and gadding hearts of ours? and to look up to him and come in his strength, who can unite our heart to his feat and establish it with his grace? *Heb. 13. 9. Psa. 112. 7. Psa. 86. 11. &c.*

But, 2. if to this native, constant and abiding sink and puddle, be super-added any grievous sin and actual transgression against light and conscience, as this will mar our acceptance, So it will exceedingly stretch and dull our Spirits: a guilty conscience dare not (n) look the judge in the face with such boldness; confidence, cheerfulness and readiness as otherwise it would; *then (and never till then) shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy Commandments,* Psa. 119. 6. See Part 2. Ch. 1. and 3. The Lord will not condescend to treat and reason with us, till we wash and make our selves clean, till we put away the evil of our doings, and cease to do wickedly and learn to do well, *Isa. 1. 16, 17, 18.* and will he suffer us to plead with him while we are wallowing in the mire and lying in our uncleanness? Ah! with what deadness and confusion of spirit must guilty and self-condemned sinners draw nigh to God? and what cold, formal and heartless prayers must impenitent sinners offer up to the holy, just, all-seeing and heart-searching Lord? But, since the honest servants of God will abominat such gross pollutions, and by the grace of God are kept from them, so that they do not *ordinarily, easily and habitually* fall into and commit such sins, and if at any time they be thus surprised, yet will not lye in that puddle, nor add impenitence unto their back-sliding, *the Wicked one is not permitted thus to touch them,* 1 Joh. 5. 18. therefore they should not think it enough that they are preserved from these conscience-wasting iniquities, but should also carefully watch against those sins which are not so easily discerned, nor much observed by too many, and which are reputed to be rather infir-

mities

(n) Its a certain truth which hath been observed by some practical Divines, viz. if prayer make thee not leave sinning, sin will make thee leave praying or make thee pray for the fashion, and without life and affection.

mities then transgressions, and the result of humane frailty rather than the venom and sting of the serpent in our bosom; yea the Saints should especially guard against this sort of sins, as being most exposed to such and in greater danger to meet with temptations that way, (Sathan knowing, that for the most part it is in vain to tempt them to gross and scandalous iniquities) and thus, being more ready to fall and stumble where least hazard appears; as, 1. spiritual pride, arising from our Christian privileges and enlargement of duties, &c. We will not insist on the aggravations of this monstrous (as I may call it) sin, how unlike is the fruit to the root from which it springeth? can darkness be occasioned by light, and shall our graces become fewel to feed our pride? Ah! remember that God in a special manner is engaged against the proud; he will resist them, (o) *arridore*; he is, as it were, set in battle array against such, *Jam. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5.* O Christians, do not thus lift up your selves lest God lay you low; and while ye elevate yourselves above others, ye become as barren mountains; exposed to tempests and storms; it is to the plain valleys that God will be as the dew, making them to bring forth fruit as the vine, and to cast forth their roots as *Lebanon*; *Hos. 14. 5. 8.* compared with *Jow. 9. 16. 19.* There be many sower grapes which this wild Olive yieldeth, from whence proceedeth, 1. ostentation; 2. affectation; 3. singularity; 4. contempt; 5. condescension; 6. rigidity and unmercifulness; 7. untractableness, stubbornness and stiffness of spirit; and these and such like cursed branches do spring from the root of ambition and pride, and shall we think it strange if *the high Lord, who hath respect unto the lowly, know that proud men offend* *Mat. 23. 8. 9.* The Saints are in hazard to provoke the Lord by the sins of their holy things; their dallying with duties and ordinances, their formalities, sloth and doing the work of the Lord negligently and superficially, &c. See the causes of the Spirits with *Arduous*, *Jer. 17. 21.* We come now to the causes which do, as it were, formally dispose, and of themselves drive away the heart, and make it unfit for communion with God in any ordinance, such as

(o) *Vid.*
Leigh, Crit.
Sac. in un.
arridore

(p) *Vid.*
Calv. in
spher. pag.
(mih) 228.
616. Muler.
inst. astr. lib.
2. cap. 3.

(q) *Apud Per-*
fas ut venera-
biliores reges
essent, à vulgi
compositu se re-
movebant &
pecoratosiam
(no populo sa-
ciebant, ne sa-
militaritate &
frequentia vi-
lecerat regia
majestas, Greg
Theolof. de
repub. lib. 2.
cap. 3. § 4.
 (r) *Quod*
etiam à Par-
this usurpatur
 — *apud*
quos reges in
generalibus
regia occultis
sub specie ma-
jestatis delites-
cunt, Alex. gen.
dier. lib. 5.
cap. 24.

Barbly mindedness, if thy heart be too much let out upon the creature, it will be strained towards God: the Moon must be eclipsed when the earth is interposed between the Sun and it: our Moon hath no light of it self, (whatever be said of that great Luminary in the heavens) and therefore, when the world goeth between, and intercepteth the beams and influence of the sun of Righteousness, what darkness and deadness must cover it's face? Ah! Christian! dost thou not find the world to be the devils optom, whereby he blisphemy the heart and indisposeth it for a communion with God? when we live too much upon the world, and suffer it to take up so much of our time, strength and affections, we are unfit to walk with God. Ah! doth not our sad experience teach us, that hardly can we get our hearts drawn up to God after the adulterous embracement of the creature: if a Saint, but how the knee to the worlds trinity, and cast a greedy look on pleasures, honours and profits, this, as it will provoke the Lord to jealousy, so it will fling away the heart: and if these lovers once take possession thereof, they will hardly be gotten driven out, 2. Want of awe and reverence makes us careless in our approaches to God, and makes the Lord to hide his face. The (q) Persian and (r) Parthian Kings, to shew contempt, and that they might be the more honoured, did keep a distance and were seldom seen, but once or twice a year, if the child forget to keep a due distance, the father must not smile and dandle it, as formerly, then nothing but austerity and frowns, that the unmannerly son may learn no more to abuse his fathers kindness: and if we will not acknowledge the greatness of God, it is justice with him to make us find his hand: hence the Apostle, while he exhorteth to reverence and godly fear, representeth God as a consuming fire, Heb. 12. 28. 19. See Part 2. Ch. 2. Sect. 1. Ah! shall the reverent and respectful heart be so much taken up with over our thoughts, and take heed to our words while we are in his presence? and shall we dare to speak to him with whom is terrible majesty, and suffer our hearts to wander? If the Lord did only punish this contempt by his withdrawing

drawing and going away from us, (and who would not turn his back upon him who did not more prize and value his presence?) what coldness and deadness must seize upon our hearts? and this our voluntary deadness, flowing from an irreverent and aweless frame of spirit, is justly followed with a penal desertion, which must be accompanied with a further measure of deadness and irreverence.

3. Hypocrisy and want of sincerity; *a double minded man is unstable in all his ways*, Jam. 1. 8. and albeit this evil be in part cured in the Saints, yet it may so far prevail upon occasion, as to keep the heart from fixing and being serious at it's work: there can be no constancy nor fervency where there is not sincerity; an hypocritical heart must be a *(f)* *divided heart*, and while that prevaileth we cannot seek the Lord, nor call upon him with the whole heart; and so much of the heart as doth not concur in the duty, must be other-ways employed and divert the mind, hence wandering thoughts, deadness, &c.

(f) Hos. 101
2. The Ho-
brows hold out
an hypocrit as
having two
hearts,

לֵב אֶחָד
וְלֵב אֶחָד
cor & cor,
1 Cor. 12. 33.
P/a. 12. 2.
&c. Hence
also with us
be is called a
double mind-
ed man.
(1) Pro. 27. 9.

4. Want of feeling and sense of thy wants and indigence; when the poor man is pinched with famine, and his empty stomach sets him a work, with what seriousness and importunity will he cry and beg? but if he be full or forget his misery, he may fall asleep or become remiss in asking. When *Laodicea* fancied her self to stand in need of nothing, she would not go to the market to buy; hence Christs warning and counsel, *Rev. 3. 17, 18. the (1) full soul loatheth the honey-comb; but to the hungry every bitter thing is sweet.* O! come not to Christs door till thy hunger send thee thither; thou canst not feelingly nor seriously ask, neither wouldst thou prize the mercy though thou didst receive it, unless thou be sensible of thy indigence and need.

5. Diffidence and distrust; 1. if we distrust Gods care and providence in governing the world, and minding his people in all their straits and difficulties, we will readily seek to help our selves and run to the creature for a supply, or if we seek to God, but for the fashion, in a careless and formal maner; those who expect little from God, will not be very serious in their addresses to him, *Isa. 27. 15.* 2. Distrust of Gods

fideliety in fulfilling the promises to hear and answer our prayers; we will be heartless at work when we expect little success, advantage or reward; they who begin to doubt and (with them, *Mal.* 3. 14.) to ask, what profit is it to follow the Ordinances of God? will be ready either (with him, *2 King.* 6. 33.) to say, why should we wait or call upon him any longer? or else with Papists and Formalists to rest on the outward performance without life and hear, and to think any sort of performance enough and too much? our diffidence and distrust will be followed proportionably with so much despondency, deadness, want of life, activity and fervency in our work: *saith* (saith (n) one) *is the back of steel to the bow of prayer, which sends the arrow with force to heaven; where saith is weak the cry will not be strong; he that goeth about a business with little hope to speed, will do it but faintly; he works (as we say) for a dead horse, the less we hope the less we endeavour, See Part 2, Ch. 2. Sect. 2.*

6. Excess and surfeiting; when the soul is full and glutted, it is not fit for bodily, far less for spiritual, exercises: therefore, if ye would watch unto prayer, ye must be sober, *1 Pet.* 4. 7. If we would not fall asleep at our work, let us use the creatures with moderation and sobriety, and beware of drunkenness and gluttony, *1 Thes.* 5. 6, 7. But, as there is a bodily, so also there is a moral, surfeiting and over-charging mentioned and joyned with the other, *Luk.* 21. 34. when the soul is drunk with the (x) cares of this life, it will, *μετεωριζέσθαι*, (as the word is, *Luk.* 12. 29.) it will become like to a wandering meteor, now up now down, and unfit for any spiritual employment; worldly cares will choke good motions and mar the work, these thorns will over-top the good seed and not suffer it to grow, *Mat.* 13. 22. *periclitatur pietas in negotiis*: the world eats out our zeal, and exceedingly blunts and takes off the edge from our spiritual affections; if we look up to God, we will find that heavy clog and (y) weight to beset us and presse us down, and hardly will we get that burden casten off; when the soul is drowned in the world, how can it mount up, as on eagles wings, and ascend

(u) Mr.
Gurn loc. cit.
ch. 6. pag. 565.

(x) See Cause
2.

(y) Heb. 12.
2.

ascend to the throne? The world is Sathans birdlime, if we stay too long upon the earth, he will readily catch us, and cut off our wings; if our chariot drive too far in the mire, it will leave the wheels behind; when we come recking and sweating out of the world, we will find our spirits to be spent, and that we have no strength for doing the work of the Lord; nay, the world will not thus part with us, though we would leave it for a while, yet it will follow us and cry after us, and thus interrupt, divert and disturb us while we would look up to God, and therefore, if we would pray affectionally and fervently, we must be careful for nothing; as prayer is a remedy, and should come in the place of immoderate, excessive and distrustfull care, So it is inconsistent with, and cannot be to purpose performed when that is; hence the opposition, *Phil. 4. 6*, Prayer (as (2) Luther said) is *birds curatium*; the leeches that should suck out our cares; but alas! there is no such venom and distemper in the spirits of many as killeth these leeches, and will not suffer them to enter; our cares do choke our prayers, and in many are so excessive and incurable that they will not admit a remedy.

(2) Melch. Adam. in vit. Luth. pag. 139.

7. Lasciviousness, wantonness and a spirit of lust, will take away the heart and indispose us for spiritual duties, *Hos. 4. 11*. If Sampson fall a sleep in Dalitahs lap, she will betray him to the Philistins, and he may lose both his sight and his strength, and if he (a) essay to go out as at other times before, and to shake off his fetters, he will find they are now too strong for him; when that strange fire burneth in the heart, the smook thereof will defile our sacrifices, and its flame will eat out the fire of the sanctuary, which is of a heavenly descent.

(a) *Judg. 16. 20.*
(b) Sathan desires to fish in troubled waters; he is sooner apt to see any distemper in the affections, but he is in readiness to joyn with it, and to ad-
fessel to that fra.

8. (b) Discontent with our condition, family (c) contention, anger, wrath, jealousy, grief, fear and whatever excess and distemper in the affections and passions of the soul; when these are out of order, and raise tumults, stir up confusion, and make a noise in the heart, how will they disturb and distract it in holy duties? especially since Sathan will concur and contribute his assistance to the uttermost. We are not fit to

(c) Interjur-
dia for litas
Precibus non
est locus.

praise God, nor to pray to him till the heart be fixed, and freed from disquiet perturbations, *Pf.* 108. 1. Hence the exhortation so often repeated, not to suffer our hearts to be troubled or disquieted, *Job.* 4. 1. 27. *Pf.* 42. 5, 111. to pray without wrath, *1 Tim.* 2. 8. and to married persons to dwell together in love, honouring, and bearing with one anothers infirmities, that their prayers might not be hindred, *1 Pet.* 3. 7. Hence also *David's* complaint, that his trouble had shut his mouth, *Pf.* 77. 4. overwhelmed his spirit, *ver.* 3. and closed his eyes, that he could not seriously look up to God, *Pf.* 40. 12. that his heart failed, and was unfit to be employed in God's service, &c.

9. If thou do not keep a constant watch, the enemy will break in; Sathan and thy lusts are always in arms; they still lie in wait to make a prey of thy heart; and therefore if thou be not on the watch-tower, and observe thy heart all the time thou art at work, Sathans troops will enter in and overrun thy field; he will cast golden apples in thy way to hinder thy course, and if once thou begin to dandle his brats and entertain his suggestions, thou wilt hardly get them shaken off; O how much better were it to keep the heart with such diligence, that they might not so much as once enter the palace, and if they must needs intrude themselves, to repell them in the very entry, which cannot be done unless we take heed and observe them; if then we would pray to purpose, and not suffer Sathan to make a prey of our hearts and prayers, we must hearken to the exhortation, and add watching to prayer, *Mark.* 13. 33. we must watch unto prayer, *Eph.* 6. 18. and watch in prayer, *Colos.* 4. 2. See *Part.* 2. *Ch.* 1. and *Ch.* 2. *Set.* 1.

(d) Nihil in
intellektu
quod non suis
sensibus in se
sensibus

10. Not guarding the outward senses, those (d) in-lets of vanity, and betrayers of the heart to Sathans temptations, especially the eyes, these doors that were first opened to that murderer; the tree seemed pleasant to the eyes, and the woman apprehended it to be good for food, *Gen.* 3. 6. Hence *Solomon* arrests the eyes, as well as the heart at Gods service, *Prov.* 23. 26. And *Job* would have his eyes brought under the bond of a covenant, that they should not entice his heart

by

by beholding any lustfull object, *Iob, 31. 1.* A roving eye will make a wandering heart; if we did hold the senses under a more severe restraint, we would be more equal, constant and serious at our work: Ah! how may we blush when we hear of the fixedness, seriousness and immovableness of Pagans? the story of the Spartan youth is most remarkable, who holding the golden censer to *Alexander* while he was offering incense, though a coal did fall on his hand, yet would rather suffer it to burn, then by crying, or once stirring his hand to shake it off, he should in the least disturb and interrupt the idolatrous service of a supposed God; and upon how small an occasion offered either by the eye or ear, will we be disturbed in, or diverted from the worship of the true God?

11. Taking unseasonable times for the performance of this duty; when we are dull, sleepy and unfit for action, or when the heart is over-charged with the cares of this life, and deeply plunged in worldly business, or distempered with some passion; if we make choice of such a season for prayer, no wonder though deadness accompany, and wandering thoughts interrupt the duty. Its true, bodily drowsiness will creep on, yet it is our fault, and for the most part through our negligence and not observance, that the affections are distempered, and that the heart is so far (a) drowned in the world; and therefore when we find any distemper to arise, and the heart cleave too much to the creature, and to pursue and seek after it too greedily and affectionately, it is our duty, and it were our wisdom to sound a retreat; and that we might keep it from an adulterous embracement of the world, when we are most serious in any such employment, we might now and then dart up to God some spiritual desire and short meditation, but when we observe it to be distempered and over-charged, it were better to recollect our selves a little, and to spend sometime in bringing off and composing our spirits by some awakning meditation (which yet may be intermixed with ejaculatory petitions) then to rush upon the duty while we are so indisposed and unprepared. Ah! how would we be afraid? and what confusion would seize upon us, if Christ, when he came to us, did find us in such a distem-

(c) *Quid enim maris nomen nisi secularium mentium inquietudo signatur? quia dum vita (seculari) non procollosis attentionum motibus concitatur ab interna quiete, neque stabilitate distinguatur, Gregor. mor. lib. 18, cap. 27.*

per?

pet? Luk. 21. 34. and should we not now be afraid thus to go to him?

12. Want of frequency, (f) omission, dilate and neglect of prayer; *use* (as we say) *makes perfectness*; sure I am, thou canst not attain to any perfection in holiness without frequency, constancy and diligence; the (g) mind cannot be idle, but must be employed, and all the while it stayeth away from God, it is contracting and drawing on a contrary impression, and some indisposition to look up to him; the world will leave a tincture behind it, which thou wilt not easily rub off; and if the world be too familiar with thee, it will grow bold, and will intrude its self when we would be rid of its society; nay, but though the world did take its leave of us as soon as we pleased, leaving no impression nor tincture behind, yet there is corruption enough within which if it be not wrought out by holy exercises, will quickly defile and contaminate the place where it is; a key, when not used, gathereth rust, and a vessel will leak and not hold what is put in it; So if the heart be not inured to holy motions, it will let them slip, and will not be able to retain them; and the key of prayer, if it be not often used will grow rusty, and will not be able to open the gates of heaven: Hence the exhortation to *pray always*, Luk. 18. 1. 2 Thes. 5. 17. &c. importing at least that there should be no such intermission of prayer, as may occasion deadness, and indispose us for that duty.

13. A giving way to a slight, lazy, dead and superficial performance of this solemn duty; if we accustom our selves to do the work of the Lord negligently, we will find no small difficulty to stir up the pins, and to bring the heart in tune again; weak acts (h) weaken the habit and principle, and

(f) Inaequalitas, inconstantia, & tarditas non tantum remota faciunt, sed etiam impedimentum pro gressus, sed et causa regressus, Plac. mor. de prof. virt. pag. 16

(g) Manifestum est quod habitus virtutis moralis facit hominem promptum ad eligendum modum in operationibus & passionibus; cum autem aliquis non usitur habitu virtutis ad moderandas passiones, necesse est quod proveniant multa passiones & operationes

praeiudicium virtutis extinctionis appetitus sensitivi, & aliorum quae externis moventur, unde corrumpitur virtus, vel diminuitur per cessationem ab actu. Thom. 1. 2. quaest. 53. art. 3. in corp.

(h) Aliqui actus ab habitu procedentes diminuant ipsum, ut puta cum negligenter fiunt. apud Thom. 1. 2. quaest. 52. art. 3. in r.

beget an inclination to do remissly and negligently, or rather an impotency and inability to act (i) vigorously and to purpose; the sluggard will not purchase a meal by his work; our lazy spiritual performances, as they cannot procure, so neither do they bring with them meat in their mouth whereon the soul should live, they bring with them no heavenly influence, and thus the new man for want of daily refreshment must become (k) languish'd and feeble, and that heavenly im-

not fit for a journey, be it so used to a slow pace that he will not leave it.

(k) We will not now at any length debate the question concerning the growth and decay of grace, with learned Mr. Ford affirming, that no gracious habit can properly be said to grow or decay, but only in respect of the acts that flow from it, in that it may be clogged and obstructed as to its operations. But remove these obstructions, and grace will act as vigorously as ever it did. Spir. of Adopt. ch. 43. pag. 499. We having here supposed (as we thought) with all Divines, and asserted the contrary, we shall only ad some few particulars in a word, for preventing such a mistake. And, 1. that the great School-man Suarez professeth, that he never read any Divine who affirmed, that the habits of grace were so insensible that they could admit no growth or decay, yea, or who durst deny, that actually and de facto they did not grow and encrease, Suar. de grat. lib. 9. cap. 2. sect. 3. Hence he doth not dispute, but suppoeth that in every grace there is a sufficient latitude of degrees, within which, as it may grow, so it may decay. ibid. lib. 11. cap. 8. sect. 1. Its true, the popish Schoolmen, albeit they plead for the growth of grace, yet deny that actually there is any partial decay of it, but upon such grounds as all orthodox Divines will abominate, viz. Because all and every mortal sin doth not diminish, but totally destroy and remove grace; and venial sins, as they do not abolish and take away, so neither can they weaken and diminish the habits of grace, Thom. 2, 2. quæst. 24. art. 10. in corp. Bannez. in loc. Suar. loc. cit. Dur. & alii in 1. sent. disp. 17. Lugo de fid. disp. 16. sect. 4. Bécán. de charis. cap. 23. quæst. 6. But laying aside that vain distinction of mortal and venial sins, and that opinion concerning the Saints apostasy, none of them will deny, that grace may as truly be said to decay as to grow, vid. Suar. loc. cit. lib. 9. cap. 2. sect. 24. In gratia ipsa non deest latitudo graduum, ratione cuius possit successive amitti, ac prius minus quam omnino perire; alibi omnis tamen ex defectu causarum corrumpensium, &c. But, 2. to speak to these severally, and first, as to the growth of grace; the Scripture is most express in several places; this the Father of the possessed prayed for, Mark, 9. 24. this we are exhorted unto, 1 Pet. 3. 18. Secondly, if we come to particulars, may not faith, hope, love, &c. be encreased and why do we use the means, if our state be not bettered thereby? and why do we trade any more if our talents do not multiply and encrease by a right and diligent improvement of them. Thirdly, shall not grace at length be perfected, and is it not now on the way to perfection, and shall we imagine that there is no progress made in that way? &c. 2. As to the decay of grace, through the withdrawing of the Spirit, because of our negligence and folly, 1. if Adam lost a greater stock (as all grant, albeit the learned Dr. Twisse doubts whether or not he lost all grace, vind. grat. pag. 751.) why may not we who are weaker, lose a part and some measure of ours? Hence our Divines, while they are pleading against the total and final apostasy of the Saints, affirm, that the perseverance of the Saints doth not flow from their own strength, or from the nature and measure of grace they have received,

but from the free promise, decree and appointment of God, and the custody of the Spirit. *idem spiritus quoad naturam suam, amitti potest & perire sed s. &c. Perkins.* do not lose lib. 3. cap. 8. sect. 5. vid. etiam *Twiss.* in sect. 4. Its true, that according to the covenant of grace, the Jewel cannot totally be lost, *thesus d. God must remain* 3. 9. gracious habits cannot be lost (saith *Perkins*) *secundum esse*, yet they may be diminished *secundum gradum aliquem*; yea, if we look upon them in their own nature, or in relation to us, they may altogether perish or decay, *ipse habitus* (inquit *Perk.* loc. cit. sect. 10.) *sive potentia fidei per se amitti potest, sed propter gratiam confirmantem non perit fides secundum esse, sed minuitur secundum gradum aliquem; & hinc sequitur posse minus communionem cum Christo sed non posse solvi unionem.* 1. If in different believers there be a different measure and degree of grace (some being weaker some stronger) why not also in one and the same subject? and why may not a strong Saint by his fall lose some of his strength and become weaker? and why did *David* complain that his bones were not only weakened, but, as it were, broken, *Psal.* 1. 9. 3. Why was the Church of *Sardis* exhorted to strengthen that which was ready to die, *Rev.* 3. 2. if their graces were not on the decaying band? I willingly grant, that as the habits of grace are not produced by our acts, so neither are they physically and efficiently increased thereby, or thus diminished by the contrary acts of sin; yea the very Jesuits do affirm the same, which also is as some length confirmed by *Jo. de Lugo* de fid. disp. 16. sect. 4. where also he sheweth the difference (as to this point) that is between natural and gracious habits, sect. 77. vid. etiam, *Suar.* de grat. lib. 8. cap. 4. but the Spirit being provoked to depart and withdraw his influence, proportionably to his departure, *ob defectum causam conservantia*, and this decay of grace usually is accompanied with an obstruction of that little which remaineth: So that we may here apply fitly that Authors similitude in *Samson*, whose strength as it was abated (though not by his binding, yet while he was bound) other wise their cords could not have held him (albeit being extraordinarily assisted at his death and, with his hair, having then a little recovered his strength, he laid the Philistines upon heaps) but as he lost his great strength, So the little that remained was bound up, and he could not improve it.

pression which once was upon the soul must wear off, and thus by little and little we come to the Laodicean temper of lukewarmness, and are (as they were, *Rev.* 3. 16.) in hazard to be *spued out of Christs mouth.*

14. All company will be as water to quench the heavenly fire; its very dangerous for those who have the seed of all diseases in them, to converse with those who have the plague; if the root of the matter were not within us, the breath of the wicked would not be so contagious and infectious; there is not only powder, but fire enough within, which though it lie, as it were, under the embers, yet if it be blown up with a blast from without, the flame will quickly appear, and when our lusts are set on fire, they eat out the fire of the Spirit; do ye not find it so, O Saints? if ye stay but a little while in the

the Society of the wicked, do ye not find your feet to be still in the fetters, and that it will not be euse for you to cast these off when ye would draw nigh to God? Its true, sometimes by a spiritual *antiperistasis*, these cooling vapors may make thy zeal to burn; how will thy heart rise at the dishonour done to God? and with what indignation maist thou at first hear their profane and cursed words; and behold their debauched and vicious conversation? and yet if thou abide a while among these vipers, their deadly poyson may in a short space so stupifie thee, and cast thee into such a lethargy, that thou wilt scarce be affected with those evils, which at first were a vexation to thee; albeit *Lot* lived in *Sodom*, and kept his garments unspotted, yet if he had familiarly conversed with the vile Sodomites, his righteous soul in hearing and seeing, had not been from day to day so vexed with their filthy conversation, as we find it was, *2 Pet. 2. 7, 8.* Ah! should the living, like that possessed man, *Mark 5. 3.* forsake the company of the living, and abide among the dead? or should we, *Nabuchadnezzar* like, abandon the Society of men and eat grass with the beasts? Ye, who would be afraid to dwell among the tombs, and would choose death rather then to be driven from the Society of men, and have no other meat but the grass of the earth, do ye not know that the wicked are so many dead men, *Mat. 8. 22* (yea, twice dead, *Jude, 12.*) and that beastly men? and the swine of the world feed on harks, *Luk. 15. 16.* ye can have none of the childrens bread while ye sit at their table, and should ye then eat of their dainties, *Pf. 141. 4.* their is something of the serpents venom mingled with all their enps, so that their very breath is become infectious, it is not safe to live in such an unwholsom air; holy *Joseph* in the court of *Egypt* learned to swear by the life of *Pharaoh*, *Gen. 41. 15.* and thinkest thou that thou shalt be able to keep thy self free of contagion? but though thou didst not so far comply, as to joyn with them in their profanity, or in any wicked way, yet if ye do not timely obey the exhortation, *2 Cor. 6. 17.* and so soon as ye perceive the edge of your zeal to be blunted and wear off, if ye do not separate your selves, and come out from

among them, its no wonder though ye meet with straitning and deadness when ye have left them and go to approach the throne.

(1) *Sublata
causa tollitur
effectus & po-
ssa ponitur.*

Thus you see the causes, which if ye could remove, the cure would be in great part (1) carried on. As the Physicians skill is mainly put to the tryal in finding out, So his labour and diligence is especially employed in removing the causes of the disease, which if they continue, all his *lenitives* and *asswaging* medicaments will be to little purpose; and if ye suffer these weeds still to grow, do not complain though the seed of the Word take not root, and the Ordinances make no lively impression upon your heart, nor their influence abide or appear in your life and conversation: lazy Christians must be dead and lifeless, there is much activity required for maintaining the quickning presence of the Spirit, and is it not well worth all the pains? and will ye still complain, while the fault lieth at your own doors? The wise mans verdict, as it hath place in civil affairs, So far rather here; *The soul of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing, but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat*—the sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold, therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing, Prov. 13. 4. Prov. 20. 4. *I went (saith he) by the field of the slothfull, and lo it was all grown over with thorns, Prov. 24 30, 31. how long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep, Prov. 68 2.* And if thou wilt hearken to this awakning question, and if thou wilt pluck out these thorns out of thy field, and if thou wilt be at some pains in plowing and sowing, thou may, through the blessing of the Almighty, expect a plentiful crop.

And if thus the first part were faithfully performed, the latter would be the more easily carried on, if ye would carefully remove these thorns and obstructions we have named, we need not multiply *positive directions*; which before we name, we shall yet once more resume these impediments, and enquire whether or not yet thou be resolved through the help of the Spirit; 1. to use the world as if thou used it not, to watch over it as an enemy, and not to suffer thy soul to be so deeply plunged in it, that thou canst not give it a discharge, and

and leave it behind thee when thou art going to the King ?
 2. Wilt thou be more reverend in thy approaches to God, and learn to keep a due distance ? 3. Wilt thou be more sincere and upright in thy professions and petitions ? 4. Wilt thou lay thy condition to heart, and come more sensibly and feelingly ? 5. Wilt thou labour to strengthen and stir up thy faith ? 6. Wilt thou use the creatures with moderation and in sobriety ? 7. Wilt thou watch against the lustings of the heart as well as against bodily uncleanness ? 8. Wilt thou watch over thy passions that no distemper arise in them ? wilt thou study the hard lesson of contentment, humility and patience ? 9. Wilt thou watch over thy heart all the while thou art speaking to the great King ? 10. Wilt thou also guard the outward senses ? 11. Wilt thou look after the frame of thy heart, and first give a discharge to distracting objects, before thou come before the throne ? Wilt thou choose the fittest season for calling upon God ? 12. Wilt thou be more frequent in thy addresses to God ? And, 13. Wilt thou be more serious not giving way to laziness and formality ? 14. Wilt thou labour to keep thy conscience clear, having a constant respect to all the commandments, and hating every sinful way, yea, and the very garment spotted by the flesh ? 15. Will ye not walk in the counsel of the ungodly ? yea, nor stand in the way of sinners ? 16. Will ye watch against the wiles of the devil, and resist his temptations ? 17. Will ye take heed lest ye grieve the holy Spirit by dallying with his motions and ordinances ? &c. And Will ye observe these qualifications of an acceptable prayer, of which we spake, Part. 2. and applied severall of them to this present case ? If ye have come this length, there are but a few things which I would now further add for completing the cure of a dead heart, and for holding out wandring thoughts in prayer : but before I name those other directions, I would premise these two things concerning what we have here said as to the removing the former impediments and obstructions, and what we are now to add further by way of remedy ; 1. ye would remember, that the Spirit must ^(m) help you to put these directions in practice, else they will serve to little purpose : he must help you to

(m) The Spirit may be pre-
 sently operative where he is not present sensibly

(n) Our inability must not be pretended as a cloak for our negligence, we have received strength which we should improve, waiting for the help of the Spirit.

take the right course for getting his help, and must work what ye are directed to do, else your endeavours will be fruitless; and yet ye must so (n) apply yourselves to perform these things, and to follow those or such like directions, as if ye stood in need of no help, and as if of your selves ye could carry on the work: and when thou art acting to the utmost of thy strength, thou mayst expect a sensible manifestation of the Spirit's assistance. 2. We must not think that the most active and diligent Saints do alwaies enjoy the quickning presence of the Spirit; this state of our pilgrimage is not for a constant abode; and the Spirit is a free agent, *the wind bloweth where it listeth*, that thou mayest learn not to ascribe thy enlargements to thine own activity and diligence; though none but active, zealous and circumspect Christians, are lively and enlarged in duty (as to any constancy or considerable measure) yet they do not alwaies enjoy the same influences, nor are alike enlarged; but though vivacity in duty may thus for a while be lost to thee, yet if it be not lost by thee, as it will not be reckoned unto thee as being procured through thy fault and negligence; So neither will it marre thy after-comfort and enlargement; if the Spirit's withdrawing be not penal, though it be for thy exercise and tryal, yet it needs not discourage thee, it shall not hinder thy acceptance, nor the success and prevalency of thy prayers, but if thou procure this stroke through thy folly and sloth, and if thou rest and sit down under it securely, not being affected with it, as not being much concerned in that dispensation, if thou do not lay thy deadness to heart, and labourst not to be rid of that burden, such a sleeping *Jonah* may fear a storm from the Almighty to awaken him.

(o) *Ubi est amor non est labor (et) sopor.* *Regn.*

Now come we to these other directions; 1. if you would have your heart enlarged in duty, labour to get your heart inflamed with love to your Master and his work; if ye (o) came in love, ye would stay with *delights*, when love is the cord that draws any together, they will not weary in the mutual fellowship and society of one another, but as there will be a longing in absence, So a delight and consentment in presence and enjoyment, and *what makes the husbands presence so uncomfortable*

uncomfortable to the adulterous wife, but want of love? love is an uniting affection, and pretend what we will, the want of love to God is the cause why we weary at his work, and in his company; for the heart not being fixed by the bond of love, nor arrested by delight, it gads abroad, and would be rid of the duty, as of a wearisome burden; hence wandering thoughts break in, and the duty is marred; but in heaven, when we shall see God face to face, and love him perfectly, we shall not weary of his fellowship unto all eternity.

We will not digress to speak to these motives which may serve to quicken our love, but certainly if we loved the Lord as we should, we could not, it would be an insupportable burden to stay out of his company; and we would sooner part with our life than abandon his fellowship; and Daniel would let others know, that he served such a master as he would not be ashamed to own, and go unto, notwithstanding all their cruelty and threatenings, Dan. 6. 10. If the Lord be kind to David, and his love of God be sincere, then this must be the conclusion that must needs follow, (p) therefore will he call upon God as long as he liveth, Ps. 116. 1, 2. hence also flowed his gladness to go to the house of the Lord, Ps. 122. 1. and would he then readily weary while he was in it.

2. When thou find'st thy heart indisposed, and that deadness hath already seized on it, before we set upon the duty we would stir up and awaken our dull and sleepy spirits, and rouse them from their drowsiness: saying to our soul (with Deborah when she was employed in praising God, Judg. 5. 12. *awake, awake*; O my sleepy soul, *awake, awake*, and draw nigh to the provok't King for thy life, liberty, provision, protection, &c. We will not prescribe the several heads of meditation, there being here so many several topics, which may with great variety be improved to this purpose, only in the general let me entreat, that choice may be made of such considerations as may serve most to quicken, 1. the sense of thy indigence, misery and hazard; and thus, 2. what may most humble thee and make thee see thy own vileness and insufficiency for doing so great a work; 3. what may most inflame thy heart with love to God and his service; and, 4. what may

(p) The illustration seemeth rather to be founded upon his love to God, then the benefits he had received from God though he be named there.

may most quicken thy diligence and activity; while David was thus employed, he found life come in to his joyne. When I was musing (saith he) the fire burned, Ps. 39. 3. and then he goes to work; he would delay no longer, nor suffer such an opportunity to slip. he would not choak the breathings of the Spirit, but instantly runs to the throne; and we have his prayer to the close of that Psalm: enlargement of the affections, sweetness and delight in any ordinance use to accompany, and be the fruit of meditation, Ps. 134. 6; 5. Ps. 104. 34. And this was the course which the (q) *sweet singer of Israel* used to take when he found his harp to be out of tune, Ps. 77. 5. 12. Ps. 143. 5. &c. Nor as if ejaculatory prayer might not be intermixed with our meditation, for alone we are too weak to wrestle with a dead heart; a cry to heaven will bring help from thence; this is (r) said to have been *Luthers* practice, and which from his own experience, and the success he had met with, he pressed on others; and this seemeth to have been *David's* custom also before he prayeth for quickning, we read of his meditation, Ps. 119. 148, 149. But whatever be our carriage while we are employed in the work of meditation, Yet,

3. We would seriously and solemnly beg of God his quickning Spirit, and bemoan the deadness of our heart, saying [Lord I dare, not I may not stay away, and I am afraid to draw nigh to thee, I must speak, and I know not well what to say, I miss my leader and guide, and what am I but a poor, blind, guilty sinner, Lord pity me and help my infirmities, Lord (s) quicken me according to thy loving kindness; (t) Awake, O north wind, and come, O south, and blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out; let my beloved, who hath for a while withdrawn, return unto his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits; (u) Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in former time, that sorrow and mourning may flee away: (x) Draw me, and I will run after thee; (y) Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit] and in your complaint bewail more the loss of the quickning and assisting, then of the comforting work of the Spirit; and be more afflicted because

(q) 1 Sam.
23. 1.

(r) Vid. Pref.
Saints exor.
form. 2.

(s) Psa. 119.
159.
(t) Cant. 4.
16;

(u) Isa. 51.9.
31.

(x) Cant. 1.4.

(y) Psa. 51.
22.

because ye cannot serve God better, then because ye find not that sweetness in his service which formerly ye have felt: Ah I let us not be so much affected with our own loss, as with the dishonour done to God by our empty and formal performances, especially since we may well spare for a season the consolations of the Spirit, but his help and assistance is necessary; a child of light may for a time walk in darkness, but he cannot live, nor move without his leader and guide, and unless the Spirit of life do breath (though insensibly) upon him.

You will say, my loss is thus greater then I can be sensible of; O I when I remember my former enjoyments, while she beloved brought me to the banquetting house, and his banner over me was love, when he stayed me with slugs, and comforted me with apples, O, with what delight did I then sit down under his shadow, and how sweet was his fruit to my taste? Cant. 2. 4, 5, 3. Such as never tasted the honey-comb, know not its sweetness; O I but its a (2) sad thing to have been once happy. *Ans.* O I that the world knew, and had once tasted the comforts of the holy Ghost, I might ask, with Eliphaz, are the consolations of the Almighty small, and of little account with thee, Job, 15. 11. But alas I few are acquainted with, and do experimentally know, and therefore few value and prize this hidden manna: And as for thee, O disconsolated Saint I though thou hast reason to lay to heart thy loss, yet thou shouldst not idolize thy comfort, though spiritual and terminated in God; thou should not prefer the gift to the Giver, and the tokens and pledges of love, to thy beloved his honour, work and service.

(2) *Miserum est fuisse beatum.*

4. Then observe the frame of thy heart diligently, and take notice when the Spirit manifests himself, and when he withdraweth, else, I thou canst not prize his presence, nor thankfully acknowledge his bounty and kindness, and thus wilt provoke him to depart; if we forget to give God the glory of his mercies, if we take no notice of what he hath done to us, and if we sacrifice to our own nags, its justice with him to draw in his hand. 2. If we do not observe when he goeth away, and are not affected with this desolate condition, this

will

will provoke him to stay away, and to depart further. 3. If we observe not when deadness first seizeth upon us, and wandering thoughts interrupt Gods service, we will not strive against this evil, nor seek after a remedy; and thus the disease will continually encrease, and become the more incurable: O! let us not then become secure and negligent, let us often look in to our hearts, and review our work, and let us under the greatest enlargement say, with him, *1 Chr. 29. 14. Who am I, that I should be able to offer so willingly; all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee*, let us then be, 1. the more humble; 2. the more thankfull, least by our pride and ingratitude we provoke him to depart, by whom only we have access, liberty and strength, and with whom none can so much as say seriously and with a believing heart, that Christ is Lord; *Eph. 2. 18. 2 Cor. 3. 5, 6, 17, 18. 1 Cor. 12. 3.* 3. Let no former enlargement in duty make thee go in thy own strength, but in all thy approaches to God lean to him, who only can strengthen and establish thy goings; thy vine will not bring forth fruit, unless it lean to this wall, *Psa. 119. 116, 117.* 4. So soon as thou observest any decay of life and activity, lay it to heart, be humbled for it, strive against it, and complain to God of it; if thou suffer deadness by little and little so creep on; it will turn to a habit, which will hardly be shaken off; *principia obsta*, remember Solomon, he suffered his heart to be stollen away by his strange wives, till at length he built high places to the abominations of the heathen (yea, and some think that he sacrificed to them) *1 King. 11.* The longer thou delayest to return, thou wilt depart the further from God: but if we did call our selves to an account after every prayer and performance, and did judge our selves for every wandering thought, for our deadness and negligence in doing the work of the Lord, what a notable mean might this, through the blessing of God, prove for the remedying these evils? what we daily observe with a mourning eye, we will watch against, and will not readily commit, but when we forget, and do not lay this evil to heart, it must continue, and may daily grow worse and worse. And thus.

5. Let us renew our resolutions to hold our heart fixed at the duty, to be active and serious in the work, and to guard against all diversions and impertinent thoughts whensoever we shall draw nigh to God; there is never any (a) voluntary omission of, or defect in duty, but there must be some fault and deficiency in our resolution; for, if the will and resolution were absolute and peremptory, all the rest of the faculties would be in readiness to obey, and to follow the pursuit to the utmost of their power. But an unresolved and wavering minded man, must be unfixed in all his waies, *Jam. 1. 8.* And here I may appeal to thine own experience, O dejected Saint, didst thou ever go to prayer with such a renewed and fresh resolution, but thou fandst the fruit of it? and art thou not now convinced of thy negligence for drawing nigh to God many a time in much despondency, and of thy careless yielding (as it were) and giving way to the tempter to steal away thy heart from the duty? and though once there was some kind of resolution, accompanied with a proportionable success, yet now it is worn weak and feeble, because thou hast not from time to time renewed it, and kepted it in life; O I but if thy heart were once steeled and fixed with such a serious and new resolution, ye might more confidently expect the Lords help, and in his name might engage, yea, and promise (with that holy man, *Psa. 57. 7. Psa. 180. 1.*) to be serious and fervent in praying or praising of God; if ye were thus awakned, ye would awaken, summon and arrest all that is within you to joyn in the work, which after such an alarm would not readily fall asleep so soon, especially when they are employed and held at work, *Psa. 57. 8. Psa. 103. 1.*

(a) *Albeis some natural and involuntary defects may still remain during this state of weakness and impotency,*

6. In the intervals of prayer (which must not be long) let us hearken to the exhortation, *1 Pet. 1. 15. Be holy in all manner of conversation;* if ye either sin away, or suffer the world to steal away that heavenly frame of heart which now thou enjoyest, when thou bringest thine offering to the altar thou wilt have fire to provide (which is not as thy (b) call and command) and therefore no wonder though thy sacrifice be cold, imperfect and loathsome; O I but when the heart is fitted and seasoned for the duty, and when fire from heaven

(b) *For it must come from above,*

(c) Phil 4. 18.
Eph. 5. 2.

(d) Mat. 23.
35.

is kept alive, ye may take the center in your hand, and go offer to God an (c) acceptable and well-pleasing sacrifice, an odour of a sweet smell; when the heart is spiritual, and heavenly thoughts are familiar to us, it will be no hard task, out of that (d) treasure, to bring an offering to the Lord; and for this effect, I shall now only hold out these four or five words of counsel and advice (which may also serve as so many directions, though more remote, and may be added to the former) for quickning the heart in prayer, and guarding against wandering thoughts.) 1. Then if thou wouldst not have thy heart *strained* in thy addresses to God, do not *flint* thy self to such a measure of holiness in thy life and conversation; he who thinks himself holy enough already, is void of true holiness; he who saith, hither will I aim and go, and no further, may fear least yet he hath not advanced one step (though toward, yet not) in the way of God: this was not Pauls course, he knew that he had not already attained to perfection, but forgetting these things that were behind, and the measure he had already won, to he reached forth unto those things which were before him, pressing hard toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God, Phil. 3. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. And that herein he was not alone, but that all the Saints did, and should follow the same course, he testifieth, ver. 15. Now this mark at which Paul did level, was not that imperfect copy, and half-reformation of many unsound professors, but the perfect law of God: when we look to those who are below us, we may, like the Pharisee, Luk. 18. 11. with a proud and unsound heart thank God, that we are not as other men, who yet may be nearer the kingdom of heaven than we our selves, ver. 14. Thus we must not look after, nor make the example of the best our rule, or rest on their measure (because they rested not there themselves) though we could attain to it; yet I deny not, that good use may be made of the example of eminent Saints. Hence, our second direction is this, Let us view and set before our eyes the zeal and unwearied diligence of eminent Saints in all ages, as a *moivie* to quicken us in our course; a dull horse will mend his pace when he seeth others before him to ride quickly;

quickly : when *Julius* (e) *Cesar* beheld *Alexanders* statue, and considered what notable acts had been done by him yet a youth, and in so short a time, how did it affect him and quicken his diligence ? and (f) *Miltiades* his rare Trophies made *Themistocles* abandon his sleep, and almost forget to eat : and for what was all this emulation and contention among those noble Pagans, but for a poor perishing trifling, and so was not worthy once to be named or compared with the magnanimous zeal, and unwearied diligence of the Saints for the honour of their God, the (g) incorruptible crown of glory, and the undefiled inheritance reserved in heaven for them : And shall not their example stir us up, and quicken us in our course ? especially since their faith, zeal, patience, activity and diligence is recorded in the Scriptures for our imitation ; thus the Apostle having set down a brief catalogue of some of those renowned worthies, *Heb. 11.* he sheweth for what purpose he did so, *Chap. 12. 1.* viz. that we being compassed with such a cloud of witnesses, might by their example be excited to run with the greater alacrity and cheerfulness the race that is set before us ; hence also *Pauls* exhortation to follow him, as he did a more noble copy, *1 Cor. 11. 1.* and to people to follow their teachers in the Lord, *Heb. 13. 7.* and albeit every generation hath had some who have been eminent for holiness, and though of late many famous Martyrs in *England* and elsewhere have suffered under popish persecution and cruelty, yet in the first ages of the Church, for ordinary, albeit there was less light, yet there was more heat ; and now the lives of the most part are a scandal to the holy profession, but then Christians were more zealous, circumspect, tender, loving, self-denied, &c. And how many under the first ten persecutions were glad of an opportunity to lay down their lives for Christ ? yea, many of their own accord (h) offered themselves to the flames ; and though thousands from day to day did suffer, yet the number of professors did daily increase ; The (i) *lives of the Martyrs becoming the seed of the Church* ; many strangers did then come in, who seeing the zeal and courage of Christians, joyned with them in their sufferings, owning Christ and his Gospel

(e) Sueton in
Jul. Cef.

(f) Plutarchi
Themistocles.
fol. (mhi)
55.

(g) 1 Pet. 1. 4

(h) I do not
commend this
practice, which
yet did very
much evidence
their zeal.

(i) Sanguis
martyrum (se-
men ecclesia

in these cruel and bloody times; but alas! how few in our dayes would abide the tryal? a little storm would make the multitude of professors to renounce and disown their old Master, with whom they resolved to stand, but not for him to fall; and shall we make such our copy, and think it enough to do as they do? A third direction is this, converse with the Saints; their company and society may be very quickning, its not good for the sick to be alone, the company of friends may then be very usefull, comfortable and refreshing; but especially dead Saints may be profited by the society of their living brethren; spiritual conference flowing from sincerity, experience, sense, tenderness, &c. is very quickning and enlivening; (k) as iron sharpeneth iron, So the Saints the countenance of their friends, Prov. 27. 17. How did the hearts of the two disciples, going to Emmaus, burn within them at Christs heavenly discourse, Luk. 24. 32. Nay, the Spirit of God may come upon a (l) Saint when among the Prophets: such may find a temporary work upon their heart; and shall a Saint among the Saints meet with no heavenly impression? When they that feared the Lord spake one to another, the Lord drew nigh, and hearkned (and would he come without a blessing?) Mal. 3. 16. While the Disciples were communing about Christs sufferings, himself drew near and met them, Luk. 24. 15. and he will never be far from those who are thus employed, and such while alone, shall not (as he said of himself; John 16. 32.) be left alone, his spirit will come and visit them, Mat. 18. 20. When Christ is the subject of our conference, he will be an associat and assistant: Ah! that Saints now a dayes should be such strangers to this promising exercise; and this is one and not the least of the causes, why the Saints of old did so far exceed us in zeal, activity, life and tenderness, they could scarce meet together and see one another in the face without a word concerning their beloved: but how do we blush to speak of matters of soul-concernment, lest we should be judged to be hypocrites, singular, busie-bodies, and I know not what? I will say no more now, but there will be found to be here a mutual causality, when Christ is near the heart he will not readily

(k) Ferrum
ferro acuritur.

(l) 1 Sam. 10.
30.

readily be far from the mouth; and again the lips will affect the heart, and heavenly discourse will make an impression there. 4. Attend the ordinances of life diligently; as faith ^(m) cometh, so it is strengthened by hearing, (though private ordinances must not be slighted, yet a special blessing may be expected on Word, Sacrament and the publick Ministry) our graces, comforts, strength, activity and enlargement, are all conveyed through the same channel: and if the Word could beget a flash of joy in Herod, Mark 6. 20. if it could quicken, and, as it were, soften that flinty heart, will it not make a more deep and lively impression upon a ⁽ⁿ⁾ heart of flesh? (m) Rom. 10. 17. If the Word can thus beget heat where there was no fire, will it not far rather blow up those coals which are already kindled? 5. If we would be fervent in spirit, let us not be slothfull in business, Rom. 12. 11. Though we must be careful for nothing, Phil. 4. 6. yet we must not be idle and negligent, he who will not work, should not eat, 2 Thes. 3. 10. Immoderate, excessive and distrustfull care choaks the spirit, as too much oyl the flame, and yet moderate care in the faithful discharge of our particular calling is a notable help against sleep and drowsiness, and a preservative against infection as in the body the humours will putrifie without motion, and will beget dangerous diseases, So the faculties of the soul, when not employed, will contract rust and become unfit for action; and when they are not set a work, either in religious exercises or the duties of our calling, Sathan will readily improve the occasion and employ them in his ^(o) work; an idle man tempts the devil to tempt him; Idleness (as ^(p) one faith) is Sathans reposing bed and the mother of all Wickedness. Ah! this in great part is the cause both of the outward and spiritual poverty of many in this Land, who being askt (as Josephs brethren were be Pharaoh, 2 Gen. 47. 3.) What is your occupation? could return no other answer but that they were Gentle-men; as if by their birth they were licentiuted to be idle and to follow no calling or occupation, yea and as if a calling would be a reproach to them, and a disparagment to their ancestors and education; whileas truly, and according to Aristophanes his verdict, a ^(q) life of idleness

(o) Nihil agendo veni-
nes, male agere.
discunt.

(p) Otium
pulsat Sa-
tana & male-
ficiis principi-
um apud Reuf.
Sym. imper.
part. 1. Sym. 53.
Otia dant vi-
tia. Proverb.

(q) Προβα-
τις βίος λέ-
γεται ἐν μὴ
κατασκευῇ δι-
ατριβῇ τῆς
τῆς βίης, Ari-
stophan. apud
Reuf. loc. cit.

ness

(r) *Ego* (inquit Cyrus Xenophon-teus) *arbitror degere principem an-re ire* (subditi, non visa de pde & laborum experie, sed eo quod rabus provideat, la-boreque lu-benter subeat, Reul, ibid symb. 30.

(f) *Now* la-bour to put in practice that resolution; of which direct, 6.

ness better becometh beasts than men; and as (r) Cyrus said, it is more noble and Prince-like to excell and go before others in activity, diligence and pains, than in sloth, idleness and luxury. And, O! if such would consider that idleness was one of the crying sins of Sodom, Ezek. 16. 49. Time is too precious a talent to be hid in a napkin, and being once past, cannot be recalled, *are potest nullo per breve tempus emi*; no gold nor money can buy and redeem it.

Thus you see how ye should prepare for, and come to, the work; now let us add some few directions which may help to quicken us while we are at the Throne.

7. Then, limit your heart to the duty, and (f) arrest it at the present work, lift up your heart to God and settle it upon him, suffer it not to look down to the world or gad about; lay a restraint upon thy vain, roaring and unstable mind, repelling without dispute and inquisition every suggestion and impatient thought, not asking whence or for what it came; yea, though upon the matter and otherwise it were never so good and necessary, yet reject it then with indignation, as being unseasonable and coming to interrupt thee while thou art speaking to the great King: Albeit such pretended friends may come and get access at another time, yet now thou art better employed, and must not be diverted by such shameless and unmanerly intruders, who dar trouble and molest thee so unseasonably, and therefore say to them (but do not stay to debate with them) what *Nehemiah* said to *Sanballat* and *Geshem*, *I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down; why should the work cease whilest I leave it and come down to you*, Nehem. 6. 3. Such a holy severity and contempt must you express towards every thing that would interrupt you in the work of the Lord, it must be a temptation, though perhaps coming from Satan as transformed into an angel of light; O! consider the weight and importance of the present business and work, and that will keep thee from dallying with this ordinance; will any man be so mad as to suffer his mind to vag and be diverted with trifles, or by casting an eye on every in-comer, when he is pleading before an earthly King for his life and state, which he hath forfeited

forfeited by his folly and rebellion? and is it not so in this case? nay, thou hast far more lying at the stake, thy life, thy soul and incorruptible inheritance, thou must pray or perisb, and thou must so pray as to prevail, or thou must go to hell and be tormented for ever and ever: what *Moses* said of the words of the law, *Deut.* 32. 47. may well be applied to this ordinance, *It is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life.* Hence there must be that holy despair, impatience and violence against every thing that stands in the way to hinder us in this work, that importunity, fervency, yea, and impudence we spake of, *Part. 2. Chap. 2. Pag.* 447, 448.

8. Remember the greatness, goodness, all-seeing eye, yea and severity of him with whom we have to do; 1. should not his greatness and excellency make you afraid to dally with his work? and should not his dread fall upon you in your dead, formal and irreverent approaches to him? (that I may apply that to our speaking to God, which *Job* said of his friends speaking for God, *Job*, 13. 11. 7.) 2. Should you not fear him and his goodness? *Hos.* 3. 5. should not the tender child take heed that he do not dishonour and grieve his kind father? 3. should not his (x) presence, his inspection and all-seeing eye stir us up to greater attention and reverence than the eye of all the creatures? and yet how would we blush and be ashamed to utter such impertinencies before men; especially to a King, or some great person, which many a time we have vented in prayer to God? yea, how would we loath and abominat our selves, if we did but think that the Saints on earth were acquainted with that deadness, formality, and these wandering and sensual thoughts which we have often entertained while we came before the Lord? and yet we do not consider, that the high and lofty one, who inhabiteth eternisity, doth search the heart and try the reins, to give every man according to his waies, and according to the fruits of his doings; that every creature is manifest in his sight, and that all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do, *Jer.* 17. 10. *Heb.* 4. 13. But if neither his greatness, nor goodness, his presence nor all-searching knowledge

(x) Deus est
phara cujus
centrum est
ubique circum-
fer. nra nul-
quam, enter
præsentet De-
us oia & ubi-
que potenter.

Knowledge can prevail with thee, yet remember his holiness, justice and severity, with him is terrible majesty, he is excellent in power and in judgment, and in plenty of justice, therefore (saith Elihu) do men fear him, Job. 37. 22, 23, 24. The wrath of a King is as the roaring of a Lyon, Prov. 19. 12. but what is the wrath of all the creatures in respect of the indignation of the Almighty? Who knoweth the power of his anger, who turneth the children of men to destruction, and carrieth them away as with a flood? Psa. 90. 11. 3, 5. Who may stand in his sight when once he is angry, Pl. 76. 7. he is of purer eyes then to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity, Habak. 1. 13. he will not be mockt with our babling, our cold, formal and empty performances; O! let us then draw nigh to him with reverence and godly fear, for (saith the Apostle) our God is a consuming fire, Heb. 12. 28, 29. O! that bold, secure and presumptuous sinners would (u) tremble and fear when they come before the great God, that they become not as stubble and chaff to feed the devouring flames of his indignation to all eternity.

(u) Dan. 6.
26.

(x) Isa. 41. 14.

9. Use such a gesture as thou findest most helpfull to raise thy heart and stir up thy affections, and which expreſſeth that reverence and sence of thy distance which becometh such a poor (x) worm when it draweth nigh to its Maker: here I grant thou art not limited, for, 1. we will find the Saints to lift up their eyes to heaven, thus David, Ps. 123. 1. Ps. 121. 1. Ps. 141. 8. yea, and our blessed Saviour, Job. 17. 1. Job. 11. 41. Secondly, sometimes to cast down their eyes and smite the breast, as the Publican, Luk. 18. 13. sometimes to hold up their hands, as Moses, Exod. 17. 11. and this seemeth to have been an usual custom from, 1 Tem. 2. 8. Thirdly, sometimes to stretch forth their hands, as 1 King. 8. 22. Exod. 9. 29. Ps. 88. 9. Fourthly, sometimes to kneel down, as, Act. 7. 60. Act. 9. 40. Act. 20. 36. Act. 21. 5. yea, our blessed Lord, Luk. 22. 41. Fifthly, sometimes to fall on their face, as the Leper, Luk. 5. 12. and Christ himself, Mat. 26. 39. . Sixthly, sometimes to stand, Mark, 11. 25. Luk. 18. 13. Seventhly, sometimes to lie, as dying Jacob. Gen. 48. 2. and sick Hezekiah, Isa. 38. 2. Yea, eighthly, and sometimes

sometimes to sit, as wearied *Elijah*, 1 *King*. 19. 4. &c. And in this variety thou mayest make choice of that gesture that is most subservient to the present disposition of thy body, and for enlarging the affections, which may be different, not only as to divers persons, but also as to one and the same man at divers times and occasions: only let me from experience intreat, that thou would beware of such a gesture as may press the vital spirits, or may dispose thee to drowsiness; when we hing down the head, or suffer the breast to lean to any hold, we will find the soul (because of its sympathy with the body in this state of union and conjunction) not to be so free, active and fit to be employed in the work of the Lord. Ah! do not many in their families use such a gesture as doth speak their disrespect and want of reverence? and its too ordinary in publick for one and other in the time of prayer, to lay themselves down, or so to lean on their desks, as if they purposed to take a sleep; ah! is this the reverence and godly fear with which ye should serve your Maker and Judge? would ye, durst ye, speak so irreverently to a man like your self, if in any eminent place, and having authority, far less to a King? Ah! let us be humbled for our unmannerly, shameless and impudent boldness, or rather desperate carelessness and negligence in the worship of the great God.

We might here also add somewhat concerning the use of the voice, yea, sometimes the elevation and extension of it may be helpfull to quicken the heart; and then thou may'st retire to a solitary place, where thou may'st use the greater freedom, and not be liable to mis-construction. But, if yet thou findest thy deadness and indisposition to continue, notwithstanding thou hast used the means for removing of it, I shall further add, by way of advice, but these few particulars.

10. Whatever abuse may be of a set form, yet then thou may'st have recourse to it; perhaps thou may'st be brought so low, and be so far straitened as to want both matter and words; and might not a Saint be helped in such a strait; if he had some materials at hand drawn up by holy men, or by himself from the Scriptures, and fitted for his case and use? but yet not so as to stint and limit himself precisely to these words or

(y) Mr Zach.
Bogan prof.
to his help to
pr. and edit.

(z) Mr Ford
spirit of adop-
tion, cha 48.
pag. 126.

(a) Ibid.
cha. 52. pag.
546, 547.

(b) *Louis ci-
tatis.*

(c) As for
the excellency
of conceived
prayer where-
in the devout
Christian, out
of the abun-
dance of his
heart pours
out his re-
quests to God,
none but a
profane spirit
dare open his
mouth against
it, Mr. Gurn.
loc. cit. pag.
438.

purposes: but if he find his fetters to fall off, and the wind to blow, he may use his liberty; I must (saith Mr. (y) Bogan, who yet pleads very much for a form) needs say, if I would go by mine own experience; the heart that is warmed and enlarged with the sense of the love of God, and joy in the holy Ghost, although sometimes under a damp and some violent straining, it should be driven to a form; yet as soon as the heat comes, and the bands slaken, would find a form to wring, and long to be at liberty. When one is weak and sickly he will make use of crutches, which after he hath recovered his strength, he will cast away. And on the other hand, the judicious Mr. Ford, who is very severe against the abuse of forms, (z) comparing it to a custome, which he calleth a ridiculous absurdity, and at another (a) time prescribing this as a mean how to recover out of deadness in prayer, not to rest in forms of prayer, nor to bind our selves to the same series and frame of words; yet once and again (b) protesteth, that he is not so severe as to condemn, or forbid the use of a good form, either of our own or others framing, or to deny that young beginners may find help in the matter, method and language of a good form, and that under extraordinary deliquies and soundings of spirit, in which the soul cannot put forth its operations as before, that a godly man may not, as Christ in his agony, Mat. 26. 44. go and repeat to God, thrice and more, the same forms of words. And that we may not only at the same time repeat, but also at different occasions make use of the same form of words, is evident also from Davids soliloquy and meditation in the case of his soul-trouble and dejection, in which he thrice, and in two different Psalms repeateth the same words, viz. Ps. 42. 5. and ver. 11. Ps. 43. 5. And thus on all hands its agreed, that as a form may be abused (for I (c) know none who plead, that believers should be precisely stunted and bound to a set form in their private devotion) so it may be lawfully used in case of extraordinary weakness or indisposition, neither may we now meddle with what is here controversial.

II. While deadness and indisposition continueth, let frequency supply the want of continuance, come often, but stay

not long at the throne till thou be more able, and till the Lord arrest thee by the sweet breathings of his free Spirit. The famous (d) *Austin*, speaking of the Saints in *Egypt*, who were eminent for holiness, affirmeth that they used to pray often, but not long at a time, approving that practice as limited to the case held forth in this direction; nay, the reverend Mr. (e) *Gurnal*, speaking generally of the duty, prescribeth the same advice and direction, with this (f) caution only, *that we give no check to the Spirit of God in his assistances*, nor interrupt the duty while we find the Spirit enlarging the heart, and pressing us forward. We need not now speak to the general; but the book of the Psalms affords us many instances of short prayers poured out by the Saints while their Spirits were overwhelmed and straitned, and that one hundred and second Psalm (which was penned to be, as it were, a directory in such a case) if we look only upon the penitency part of it, will not be thought to be of any considerable length.

12. Do not faint nor weary in waiting upon the Lord; put a good interpretation on all Gods dealings and dispensations towards thee; and though thou meet with no sensible manifestation, gain and advantage, yet follow the (g) ordinances diligently, knowing that at length he *that shall come, will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10. 37. Praise God, that ye may hear his voice, though ye do not see his face, ye

(d) *Dicuntur fratres in Egypto crebras quidem habere orationes, sed eas tamen breves. fin. ac, & rap- tim, quodammodo jaculatas ne illa vigilanter creta qua oranti plurimum necessaria est, per producitiores moras evanescat, atque hebetetur intentio, ac per hoc etiam ipsi (satis ostendunt hanc intentionem finis non est obtinenda, si perduraro non possent, ita si perduraverint non cito esse rumpendam.*

Absti enim ab oratione multa loquutio, non desit multa precatio, si servens perseverat intentio (non intentio ut mendose scribitur passim in hoc capite,) nam, &c. August. epist. 12. ad prob. cap. 10.

(e) Mr. Gurn. loc. cit. pag. 477.

(f) Which Austin also addeth verbiis citatis.

(g) We spoke particularly of prayer, and now again while we recommend the use of the ordinances, though we think none, either publick or private, may be neglected, yet let me advise thee to make (acres prayer thy daily and constant refuge 3 go and say, with him, Psa. 80. 18. quicken me and I will call upon thy name 3 thou mayest recreate and dwell upon this position; for, in one Psalm the servants of God eight several times renew the same request, and prayest for quickning, viz Psa. 119. 25, 37, 88, 107, 149, 154, 156, 159.

have a sure word of promise, labour to live upon it, and in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not, Gal. 6. 9. they that wait upon the Lord, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint, Isa. 40. 31. O I then wouldst thou have strength, and be kept from fainting, wait upon the Lord in the use of the means, and though for a short moment the trial continue, yet be not discouraged, hearken to the exhortation and promise, Psa. 27. 14. *Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord, Isa. 41. 10. fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed: for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness,* saith the Lord. O I do not then quench the Spirit by thy dejection and negligence, do not sit down and mourn when thou art called to work, but stir (h) up the grace of God that is in thee; blow up the coals, there is heat within, and the help of the Spirit may be at hand though thou do not discern it, the wind bloweth when, and where it listeth, Joh. 3. 8. But we must press this point a little more fully in the following Section.

(h) 2 Tim. 1.
6.

Sect. 3.

whether our deadnes doth excuse our negligence? and whether we should pray when we are unfit and indisposed? and what will be the issue and success of those prayers that want life and fervency, and which are pestered with wandering thoughts.

Isa. 64. 7. *There is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee, &c.*

2 Cor. 8. 12. *If there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, &c.*

WE would not think it worth the while to confute those dreaming Sectaries who plead, that we should not draw nigh to God till he send out his Spirit, and till we sensibly find some impression from heaven drawing and inviting us to come to the throne; but since weak Christians may meet with the like temptations, we shall labour briefly to take out of their way that stumbling block, and to shew them that their very deadnes and indisposition, is ground enough for them to draw nigh to the Physician that they may be healed, so far is it from being an obstruction and impediment, or a plea for our negligence and omission of duty.

1. Because one sin cannot be a plea for another; now our deadnes and indisposition is our sin; and therefore must not be alledged as a reason for our neglect of prayer, which is our duty, as well as our priviledge.

2. This were the ready way to Atheism, and to cast behind us all the ordinances of life, and to abandon them for ever; for if thou be unfit to day, and upon that account liest by, thou will readily be more unfit to morrow, and so from time to time; the longer thou stayest away from God, the distance will be the greater, till at length it become an easie and tolerable burden to continue in that state; omission of duty will prove a bad preparation for it, but thus thou wilt contract

whether our deadness doth excuse our negligence, &c.
contract an habit of idleness, which thou wilt not easily cast off.

3. If thou do not resolve to mock God, and slight his work, but wilt stir up the little strength thou hast, waiting upon the breathings and assistance of his Spirit, though thou wert never so weak and indisposed, thy oblation coming from a willing mind, and according to what thou hast, it will be accepted in Christ, who pittieeth thy weakness, and will not reject thy supplication upon the account of thy bewailed infirmities; and thou needest not doubt whether such a prayer be more acceptable then no prayer, nor ask whether it were better not to pray, then to pray no better? For it is granted on all hands, that the very moral vertues of Pagans, were more acceptable then the want of them, and that those workers of moral righteousness were less guilty, then those other Pagans who omitted them. Hence, we may well argue from (a) *the like*, that thy performance of duty must be more acceptable, then the omission of it, especially since there must be some life in thy work (if a Saint though weak) while there was none in theirs, and thou being in Christ, through whom thy imperfections will be pardoned and done away.

(a) *A pari*
4. The Spirit may draw insensibly, he may be present *effectively*, where he is not *feelingly*, he may be stirring up the heart to the duty, though thou dost not discern his motion, and his help and assistance may be at hand when thou art ready to apprehend he is furthest off; and have not the Saints many a time brought a heavy, dejected and complaining spirit to the throne, and yet have gone away rejoicing and triumphing over their fears and unbelief? As the books of Psalms can afford many instances. *The Way of the Lord is strength to the upright*, Prov. 10. 29. *The Lord useth to meet them that work righteousness, and remember him in their waies*, Isa. 64. 5. When we are following our duty, and improving the ordinances, we lie in Christs way, and he will not shut his eyes, but will at length pity and heal such weak and impotent ones. I may then say unto thee, concerning the use of prayer and other ordinances, as David did

did to *Solomon* in reference to the building of the Temple, *1 Chr. 22. 16. Arise therefore and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.*

5. Ah! where shall the sick go, but to the Physician? What should a troubled spirit do, if it may not draw nigh to God for healing, comfort and life? The Lord commands us to call upon him in the day of trouble, and hath promised to hear and deliver us, *Psa. 50. 15.* and who is he that dare forbid us, and threaten wrath, while he thus promiseth to pity and show mercy? and what trouble is there that is comparable to soul-trouble, and what weakness and infirmity is like to a wounded spirit labouring under the fetters, bondage & captivity under which it hath cast it self by its folly, sin and negligence? and shall it be to no purpose for such a one to lay out his straits, and weakness to God?

6. The Lord complaineth when we will not call on him, and stir up our selves to lay hold on him, *Isa. 64. 4.* and will he chide and challenge us when we stir up our hearts to close with him, and look up to the throne of mercy? and do not say, thou wantst the Spirit to help thee, as if thou durst not go when thou art not sure of his assistance; for, he hath promised to give his Spirit to them that ask him, *Luke, xi. 13.*

Let none then pretend his unsuitness and indisposition, as a cloak to cover his negligence and unwillingness, but the less our strength, fitness and ability is, we had need be the more busie and diligent; the Apostle, *2 Tim. 1. 6.* useth an excellent allusion, while he exhorteth *Timothy* to stir up whether the (b) gift or grace of God was in him (neither of the two, I think should be excluded, both being very needfull in the discharge of his ministry, to which that exhortation mainly relateth) the word (c) *ἀναζωοποιῶν*, properly signifying to blow up the fire that is buried under ashes. And thus, as it were, to give and restore again life to that which seemed to be dead; and thus the words of the exhortation are general; and though spoken to *Timothy* (who had a large measure both of gifts and graces) yet are applicable to all the Ministers of the Gospel, yea, to all Christians, every

(b) Τὸ χάρισμα.
(k) Μετασπα-
ρα qua Paulus
nititur / nuptia
est ab igne co-
ignis, vel qui
paulatim ex-
tingueretur,
nisi stabillum
subinde ad-
movendo. &
liquum novum
ingerendo vi-
res rejuveneret
ac flammam.
proinde memi-
nerimus in
usum appli-
canda esse do-
na Dei, non
biginem o-
cto, & sup-
pressa contra-
dicta Calvin
in loc.

Whether our deadness doth excuse our negligence, &c.

one having received more or fewer talents, and some measure as of grace, so of gifts: and thus we may, to our point, from thence collect, that every one is obliged to stir up and diligently improve; that measure of strength he hath, and the weaker and less the measure be, there is the greater need of diligence; it were foolish to say, because the fire is weak and seemeth to be dead and extinguished, that therefore it were needless to blow the coals; nay, but the weaker it be, there is the greater need of blowing, and that without delay, lest in the *interim* the little spark die and go out; it were our wisdom then so soon as we perceive deadness to seize upon us, to stir up our hearts and to blow upon the coal, lest our deadness become universal and remediless: a candle, when first the flame is blown out, may with little difficulty be blown in again, which after a little delay will become more difficult, and then impossible.

Hence we may see how foolish and unreasonable the children of men are in their pleas and excuses; for, to (d) say we should not go to God till we find the heart quickened and enlarged, what else is it but to plead that we should not use the means till we have obtained the end? For, is not prayer and meditation a most notable mean to quicken a dead heart, and to beget familiarity, boldness and confidence? the Lord hath not deprived us of the means for removing that sad stroke, and should we not use them? and if we will not, we may fear that sad threatening against *Laodicea*, while in the like case, *Rev. 3. 16. Because thou art lukewarm, I will spue thee out of my mouth.* Such a temper is very loathsome to God, he cannot endure it, and shall we rest in that state and be at no pains to be rid of it: but if we will not awaken and stir up our own hearts, if the Lord mean to do us good, he will put the spur to our dull, sluggish spirits, and shake the rod over our head, and send out some one or other storm to alarm us; and were it not better to prevent such a rough messenger? Ah, how should we fear that curse, *Jer. 48. 10. When we do the work of the Lord (a) negligently?* O! if we were sensible of our danger, and were more humbled for offering to the great King a corrupt and vain thing,

(d) And thus may be a convenient argument against those dreamers, who dare plead for the omission of duty in the case of unfitness and indisposition.

(e) רמיה in Kal ejaculari in Pihel eludere quasi aliquem arcus jallacis more excutere ē spe fug, Merber. in rad. If our hands slack, and if our work prove as a deceitfull bow, the hurt will redound to the archer.

Mal. 1. 14. *I will be sanctified* (saith the Lord) *in all that draw nigh to me*, Lev. 10. 3. If ye will not stir up your selves to sanctifie him in his Ordinances, he will sanctifie his great Name and vindicat his Glory in your just punishment; as there he did in the destruction of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, *he will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain*, Exod. 20. 7. far less will he suffer his Name to be taken in vain in the immediat acts of his Worship: and therefore, when we draw nigh to him without reverence and godly fear, what a mercy is it that he becometh not a consuming fire to devour us? *Heb.* 12. 28, 29. 2. Though the Lord would not add his stroak, yet by our dead, formal and careless performances, we so dull and indispose the heart, and contract such an habit of deadness, that if the Lord were not gracious to us, laying hands on us as on *(u)* *Lot*, and pulling us, as it were, by force out of the snare, we would go on from evil to worse till there were no remedy; for, when we become negligent and careless of God's work, we become fearless and aweless of his majesty, and what a mercy is it that the next step is not black atheisme, contempt of God and total apostasie? Ah! have we not enemies enough against our souls, and shall we also become our own enemies? Sathan, that active, cruel and busie enemy, is still in arms, going about like a roaring Lyon, and seeking to devour us, *1 Pet.* 5. 8. Our lusts are alwayes in readines, and the world hath every where stumbling blocks to cast in our way, and is it time for us to sleep? especially when we are upon the watch-tower and have our sword in our hand, yea and in the time of the assault, while we seem and profess to be fighting against our spiritual enemies and laying hold upon the Lords strength, when we profess to look up to him and to wrestle with him, and thus at once, as it were, wrestle *with* the Almighty, and *against* hell and our lusts. O! that we were convinced of our folly and abominable security and negligence. 3. Though there were no other hazard but the loss of the present duty, and of misimproving that price the Lord puts in our hand, how might that rouse us up and set us a work? this is like (but much worse then) that evil whereof Solomon complaineth, *Ec-*

(r) *Gen.* 19.

16.

Nana

clos.

whether our deadness doth excuse our negligence, &c.

clef. 6. 1, 2. While we have liberty to draw nigh to the King and present our supplications to him, he openeth all his Cabinets and sets the full Treasure before us; So that the supplicant needs *want nothing for his soul of all that he desireth*; but if he be careless, slack and remiss in asking, *he hath no power to eat*; he wants a stomach and appetite, and in his supposed fulness goeth away as empty as he came; *then (and not till then) shall ye seek and find me, When ye shall search for me with all your hearts*, Jer. 29. 13. Weak pangs do not further the deliverance, nor bring the desired mercy to the birth; and as (g) good never a whit, as not the better; Ah! many pray as if they prayed not, they do not, with (g) *Eliab, pray in prayer*, they forget and slight their work, even then when they are employed in it; they have not a (i) tongue to speak, they are stricken dumb and speechless, while they are before the King; or rather they cut out their own tongue, and thus bring along with themselves that sad doom and judgment that was inflicted on the unprepared guest, *Mat. 22. 12.* after which followed, *binding hand and foot, and casting into outer darkness*, ver. 13. the shadow and first fruits whereof, perhaps have already seized also upon thee; dumb supplicants usually are deaf, blind and lame, they have not ears to hear the Word feelingly, nor eyes to see Gods face and the light of his countenance, nor feet to walk straightly in the wayes of God: O! who knoweth how great his misery is? But sleeping *Jonah* feareth no storm. Ah! is there such a master as our God? is there such a work as his service? and is there any reward which may once be laid in the ballance with the immortal crown? and is there any danger and loss comparable with the loss of the soul? and yet is there any master so served, any work so much slighted, and any danger so little minded and laid to heart? we serve Sathan and our lusts with all our soul and heart, and pursue the world with all our might and strength; no time too long, nor pains too great, if thus employed; and yet a moment of time, and any work or shadow of a duty, is too much, and too good for God: Ah! though we had no religion nor conscience, yet if there

(g) *Lambert*
Petrus, mel
man, agunt.
(h) *Jam. 4.*
17. wegeu-
yn wegeu-
eto.

(i) *See Part.*
1. Chap 4.
without the
heart there is
not a tongue
that can speak
to God. Ibid.
pag. 28.

word

were but reliques of reason remaining, how easily might we be convinced of this desperat folly and madness? But alas! secure sinners are (k) *unreasonable*, and will not hearken to any monitor; but whether such hear or not, yet not a day, nor hour passeth without a warning; so often as we see the men of the world busie in their severall trades and callings, rising up early, and travelling all the day with unwearied diligence, So oft are we put in mind of our duty, and warned to take pains for the one thing necessary; if many, to day in torment, had spent but a little of that time and pains in Gods work, and for their souls, which they employed in seeking after some perishing trifles, they might, instead of their prison and chains, to day have been in their heavenly mansions, enjoying the crown of righteousness. Perhaps you will be ready to ask, what pains should I take for eternity? There is a copy sent from heaven, and recorded in the Scriptures; but you will say, we cannot come that length; but shall I then bring you a copy from hell, how think you would these misers spend their time, if they might enjoy again this day of the Gospel which we undervalue; But, 3. shall I yet come nearer? How do the men of the world labour, with what industry, activity, fervency and seriousness, do they seek after the world, and didst thou yet thus seek the kingdom of God? But shall I yet, 4. come nearer to you? and entreat, that you would make your self your own copy, and that ye would now so serve God, as formerly ye have served sin and Sathan; that I may not add the world, nor your lawfull callings, in which, and for which ye are allowed to employ a considerable part of time, diligence and pains; but even as ye have served hell, and have been labouring to destroy your souls, will ye but (l) thus serve the living Lord, and work out your salvation: And this is that copy which the Apostle sets before the Romans, *Rom. 6. 19.* But alas! we are active and wise to what is evil, but slow and foolish to what is good; we have been swift eagles in the way of sin, but creeping worms in the way of God.

(k) The 3. 2.

(i) *Admones fideles nihil magis absurdum esse, vel etiam turpe ac pudendum quam spirituales Christi gratiam terrenam manu missione apud ipsos minus valere; ... ut tamen agam vobiscum summa indulgentia, hoc certe possum merito postulare ne frigidius vel negligentius saltem colatis iustitiam quam peccata parvisis,* Calv in Rom. 6. 19.

But lest weak Saints should be too much discouraged with the imperfections of their prayers and performances, as if all their labour were lost, and the Lord rather provoked then honoured by their vain oblations; it may here be ask'd, what measure of deadness, and when wandring thoughts do nullifie and frustrate our prayers? And having spoken a little to that question, so far as it concerneth our deadness and want of fervency, *Part. 2. Chap. 3.* Let us now mainly consider it as relating to wandring thoughts.

For answer, then let us, 1. remember the distinction of *formal* or *actual*, and *virtual* or *interpretative* attention; from *Part. 2. Pag. 428.* Hence, 2. there is a twofold distraction in duty, one *voluntary*, not resisted, regarded nor bewailed; another *involuntary*, which, notwithstanding our purpose and resolution to guard against it, and notwithstanding all our care and endeavours to prevent it, yet creepeth on, and interrupteth the duty; I grant, that none but Atheists and gross hypoerits will resolve to give way to wandring thoughts, or desire to parly with, and entertain these guests, while they are speaking to God; yet there be too many who (*m*) virtually, and by just interpretation may be said to will and desire wandring thoughts should break in, while they are speaking to God; for, according to the principles of moral Philosophy, that evil may justly be imputed to us against which we are obliged to watch and strive, and yet do not, but are careless and negligent. Hence,

We *Ans.* If, 1. we resolve against, and, 2. resist wandring thoughts so soon as we espie them to break in; and, 3. lament and mourn over our duty, when pestered therewith, then there is this virtual attention, and the distraction is involuntary; and therefore, albeit so much of the duty must be lost as was spent, or rather interrupted by such obtruders, yet these shall not be able altogether to frustrate our prayers, nor hinder their success: what the fowls did devour of *Abrahams* sacrifice was lost, but that loss did not nullifie his sacrifice, nor hinder his acceptance after he drove them away, *Gen. 16. 11.* But if thou wilt be at no pains to guard thy heart,

(m) Huc et
similes quasi-
ones spectant
ad doctrinam
de voluntario
et involunta-
rio quam (s.
Dominus vo-
lucris) a (sco-
lasticorum se-
cibus purga-
tam brevis
grale subjec-
am interim
vid. (sco. ad
3.2.)

heart, if thou drive not away these fowls, when thou seest them fall upon thy sacrifice, and dost not lay-to heart, nor mourn for the loss thou hast sustained, thy loss is greater than can be enough bewailed; these ravens have sucked all the marrow and fat out of thy sacrifice, and have rendred it a vain and unprofitable oblation; those (n) *dead flies cause thy ointment send forth a stinking savour*. They will overspread the whole duty, command and captivate the man, so that now they will not be repelled, and thus they become constant, abiding and universal; these weeds over-grow and choak the good seed; and what crop can be expected and thou willingly entertainest these robbers and evil guests, and therefore thou art inexcusable. This argument concerning wandring thoughts deserved a larger and more particular disquisition, had it not been so fully and judiciously handled by others. See Mr. Gurnal, loc. cit. pag. 310. to pag. 332. *Morn. Exerc. Sermon. 19. Mr. Cobbet, Part 3. Chap. 2.* Only let us adn (as in the like case, *Part 2. Chap. 3.*) some few passages from these modern Divines, whose words may have weight with such disconsolate ones, as are daily mourning under the burden of roving thoughts in holy duties.

Believe it Christian, it is not thine (o) inevitable Weakness, nor thy (p) sensible dulness, nor thy (q) lamented ravings, nor thy (r) opposed distractions, nor thy (s) mistaken unbelief; it is not any, nor all these that can shut out thy prayer, if thou dost not (t) regard iniquity in thy heart, Morn. Exerc. Sermon. 1.

If we fail in the manner of our prayer, and if it be a total failing, if we pray without faith, without any faith at all, without zeal, and the like, farewell to the success of such petitions; but if it be a partial failing, and thus failing strived against and prayed against, the case is very different: by the evangelical allay, we do what we desire to do, in Gods gracious acceptance—our Advocate strikes in with us, and begs his Father to regard the matter, and not the manner of our prayers, *Mr. Newton on Joh. 17. 34. pag. 499.*

(n) Eccles.
10. 1.

(o) 1 Cor.
12. 10.
(p) Mark,
14. 38.
(q) Psa. 73.
21, 22.
(r) Gen. 19;
11a
(s) 1 Joh. 9;
13.
(t) Psa. 66;
18.

whether our deadness doth excuse our negligence, &c.

Believers prayers pass a refining before they come into Gods hands, did he indeed read them with their importunities, and take our blotted copy out of our hand, we could not fear too much what the issue might be, but they come under the correctors hand, our Lord Jesus hath the inspection of them, who sets right all our broken requests and misplaced petitions, he washes out our blots with his own blood, his mediation is the fine sarse through which our prayers are boulded, and all that is coarse and heterogeneal, he severes from the pure; What is of his own Spirits breathing, he presents, and what our fleshy part added, he hides, that it shall not prejudice us, or our prayers: This was the sweet Gospel-truth wrapt up in the Priests bearing the sin of the holy offerings, *Exod. 28. 38. Mr. Gurnal, loc. cit. pag. 330.*

I have the rather added these testimonies, because though it be too ordinary for the most part of titular Christians not to regard what they offer to the Lord, though they come in their pollution, and offer a corrupt thing to the great King, yet their heart never smites them, they rest in the work done, not caring how it be done; though the fowls come down upon their sacrifice, and eat it up, yet they will not be at the pains to drive them away, nor do they lay their loss to heart, nor mourn for it; but though it be thus with the multitude, yet the generation of the righteous will take heed what they offer to the Lord, they know that their is no road more infested with thieves, then that which is between heaven and earth, and therefore when they pass that way, they put on the whole armour of God, imploring the conduct of the spirit, and a convoy from heaven to guard them thither, that they may with success carry on that precious traffick; and they will follow their dull hearts as closely all the while, as a Carrier will do the unruly Horse, fearing least if for one moment they should not attend and drive, their heart should stand still, or start aside, and yet, notwithstanding all their care and diligence, their hearts will mis-give them, and those cheaters and robbers will draw on a parly, and get advantage of them; for *the flesh will lust against the spirit, so that they cannot do what, and as they would, Gal. 5. 17.* The law

law in the members will war against the law of the mind, bringing us into captivity to the law of sin, so that though to will be present with us, yet how to perform we find not; and thus the good that we would, we do not; but the evil that we would not, that we do: as the holy Apostle complained and lamenteth (and where is the Saint on earth that may not take up the same complaint, even when he is most spiritual and best employed in meditation, prayer, &c?)

Rom. 7. 15, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24. Though carnal hearts do not value a communion with God, yet who knows what a sad affliction it is to the children of God to have their fellowship with him thus interrupted? *I verily believe* (saith

(u) a late Divine) *there are many that have already good assurance of Gods love in Christ, that if God should speak to* (u) *Mr.*

them as he spake to Solomon, bidding him ask what he should give him, who for themselves would put up this petition. Oh! Lord, that I may be delivered from a wandering spirit in holy duties, and especially in the duty of prayer, that I may thereby come to enjoy a more holy communion with thy self then ever yet I have enjoyed, *and such would account this to be a greater mercy then if God should give them to be Kings or Queens over the whole world.* O Christian! is thy deadness

and wandering thoughts thus thy burden? and is it the great desire of thy soul to be rid of them? and art thou striving and endeavouring against them? I might tell you those glad tidings, which one tendered to his friend in the like case, who seeing him oppressed with such distempers, & under such sad complaints, came cheerfully to him, & said, *I can tel you good news, the best that ever you heard, viz. as soon as ever you are in heaven, you shall serve Christ without interruption and weariness:* which words (saith) (x) my Author) *well thought on, revived the man.*

Though the Lord will not utterly (y) drive out these Canaanites out of the land, that they may be for our trial, exercise and humiliation, yet it is through our fault and negligence, if they be not brought under the yoke, and are not already become tributaries; and ere it be long the victory shall be compleat, and they shall no more molest any true Israelites; ah! why should the Saints be too much discour-

aged.

(u) *Mr. Burroughes
gosp. worshi
pag. 281.*

(x) *Thomas
Shiphard in a
letter from
new England.
pag. 110. 19.
(z) Judg. 3. 44.*

whether our deadness doth excuse our negligence, &c.

raged? they will not stay long in this wilderness, and if they were once come home, they will meet with no more trials nor temptations; we might here apply the word spoken in reference to the various dispensations and difficulties the Israelites met with in the wilderness, Deut. 8. 16. *After the Lord hath for a short while proven and humbled us by this and other trials, he will at the latter end do us good, and fully compleat our happiness.*

And so much briefly concerning those material and weighty cases propounded in the entry, and which deserved a further prosecution; and we shall now only in a word speak to two or three more; and, 1. it may be ask't, whether we may be too spiritual and too much enlarged in prayer? *Ans.* This question might seem superfluous, if not ridiculous, had not some of the popish zelots in their mystical theology exceeded all bounds, so far as to fall into gross *enthusiasms* (albeit their way and profession otherwise seemeth to be so far distant from, and opposit unto, such a dream; for since they limit the Spirit to the Popes chair, who could imagine that they could give way to this licentious liberty? and since they plead so much for lip-devotion without heat and life; who would think that they should plead for such enthusiastick raptures?) yea, and not only to own and maintain *extasies* and extraordinary elevations of the soul (for who (2) among them comes not this length?) but some of them also are so bold as to affirm, that in prayer and spiritual contemplation, there may be such a rapture and extasie, as that not only the outward, but also the inward senses and imagination may be suspended from all vital operation, and during that exercise become incapable of any motion and action; yea, and that the soul may be so much affected with, and drowned in that heavenly contemplation, as that all the acts both of the mind and will are suspended, and cease; thus the father of their mystical theology, the supposititious (a) *Dionysius*, 70. (b) *Thaulerus*, and others do seem to teach, and thus they are interpreted by their (c) fellows; but (d) *Bonaventure* and others (e) admit an act of the will, without the concurrence of the mind or understanding.

(2) *Vid.*
Thom. 2. 2.
quæst. 175 &
scholast. in loc.
& Rainer
pantheol. § de
raptu.
(a) *Dionys.*
de myst. theol.
cap. 1
(b) *Jo. Thauler.*
opus institut.
cap. 12.
(c) *Vid. Suar.*
de virt. &
stat. lib. 2. cap.
12.
(d) *Bonav.* 2.
tom. opus. de
myst. theol.
prope finem.
(e) *Apud*
Gerlon al.
ibid. 66. lib. 2.

We will not digress to compare and examine the several
 tenets of those mysterious Divines, only as to what concerns
 the present question; while they affirm, that in prayer and
 meditation the soul may be so elevated, as that neither the
 will nor mind elicit any act; we can pass no fitter verdict
 upon that opinion, then (f) *Dionysius* did on their mystical
 wisdom, calling it foolish, mad and unreasonable: For, what
 can be more ridiculous then to affirm, that we may meditate,
 and yet minde and think upon nothing; and that we can pray,
 and yet desire and ask nothing: For, prayer, (as hath been
 shown, *Part 1. Ch. 4.*) essentially, consisteth in the act of
 the will, as meditation in the act of the mind; and therefore,
 when those acts are removed, those exercises cannot be per-
 formed: and it must be a strange kind of elevation and en-
 largement of the soul; when all it's actions and operations
 are suspended, this must rather be a lethargy, sleep or swoond
 of the soul, then a perfection and elevation of it: But
 enough of this childish dream. And now, in answer to the
 question, thou needst not fear, O Christian, lest thou be too
 much enlarged in any Ordinance, it is but a little the best are
 capable of here, it is but, as it were, a tasting before the full
 meal, when we shall sit (g) down at the table with *Abraham*,
Isaac and *Jacob* in the Kingdom of heaven; but all of us
 have reason to be humbled for our deadness and want of zeal,
 even then when we are most lively and most enlarged: And,
 alas! how often do we bring cold hearts to the Throne, and
 carry them away again without any heat, sense or tenderness?
 Who can say, with holy *Bernard*, *Nunquam* (h) *abs te*,
absque te recedo; I will never go away from thee without
 thee, without some heavenly and heart-melting impression.
 Who of us can say, with that old man, of whom it is re-
 ported, that he always came from the Throne with these
 words, O (i) *eyes be ye shut, be ye shut*; for ye shall never
 look upon a more sweet and lovely object, then the light of
 Gods countenance which I have now seen? Ah! who can
 sufficiently bewail our deadness, and want of zeal and acti-
 vity, in the work of the Lord? but, because we are dead, we
 lay not this evil to heart.

(f) *Dionys.*
de div. nom.
cap. 7. vocat
singularum ac
mysticam sa-
pientiam stul-
tam, irration-
abilem, &c
amentem. I
know the po-
pish Doctors
put a myste-
rious gloss on
these words,
and I will not
say beyond the
Authors scope,
yet contrary to
the property of
the words
which we have
retained.
 (g) *Mat. 8.*
 11.

(h) *Bernard,*
Epist. 116.

(i) *Claudim:*
ni, oculi mei,
claudimini, ni-
hil enim pul-
chrum videri-
sh, &c.

And yet, sometimes, there may be a flash of life, and something looking like the breathing of the spirit; which is not of a heavenly descent; for, Sathan (*k*) transforming himself into an Angel of light, may cast in some holy motion, and follow it with some quickening meditation, of purpose to divert and cheat us of the present duty; and therefore, we would here take notice of *Bernards* advice concerning our singing of Psalms, as having as well place in our praying to God, as in our praising of him: [O I (saith this *I*) reverend Ancient) do not then only *stun idle and vain thoughts*, but beware lest ye think of those things which ye have read, or which ye have heard from the Pulpit; for, though those things be good and precious, yet they are unseasonable while ye are otherwise employed, and the spirit then will not accept of any thing that is impertinent to the present work and duty. Yet, I would not be so severe as alwayes to limit the Saints in their private devotion, albeit a Minister, or whosoever is, as it were, the mouth of others, must look to the present work, and follow it for the good of those who joyn in the duty; but if in private we meet with any notable and eminent irradiation and impulse towards any spiritual object, I know no reason why we should choak such a motion, unless we be straitned by time; so that if we give way to it, we must neglect the main duty which we intended to go about, and which our exigence doth especially call for; and in such a case we may see Sathans hand in it, and we should beware of his wiles: But if we can espy none of his designs, we may a little follow that quickning meditation, and again return to our work happily, with more life and activity. It will be found no heterogenous mixture thus to joyn meditation with prayer, nor any culpable intermission and interruption of duty, to make one thus bring supply and provision for another; the book of the *Psalms* affordeth so many instances, that we may think this to have been *Dauids* usual practice.

A second question may be this, Whether honest suppliants use to be more enlarged in publick or in private prayer? *Ans.* The winde bloweth where, and as it listeth, *Joh. 3. 8.*
the

(k) See Part
1. Ch. 9.

pag. 369.
(l) Nihil
aliud dum
placuisse prater
id quod psalli-
tis cogitatis;
negotius dico
placuisse esse
cogitationes
vanas, et oti-
osas, sed visan-
das sunt et illa
quae, &c. Sa-
tanas sunt sed
minime illa-
les, et placent
salubriter in-
ter psallendum
revelatio, & pl-
ritum enim
sanctum illa-
bora gratum
non recipit,
quicquid aliud
quam debet,
neglecto eo
quod debet, ob-
tuleris, Bern.
serm. 47. in
ps. Cantic.

the influence of the Spirit is arbitrary, both as to the seasons when, and the means whereby, it is conveyed: hence, not only are some more enlarged in publick and others in private, but also one and the same believer may at one time be more fervent and importunate the one way, and at another time the other way; and each of these Ordinances have their proper and several advantages: For, first, in publick the gifts of the Speaker, and his affectionat moving and pithy words and manner of expression; as also, the reverence and zeal of others joyning in the duty, may be very helpfull and instrumental in stirring up the affections; and then in private, there is, 1. more liberty in dealing with our own hearts, and rousing them up by some awaking meditation; and, 2. greater freedom in laying out our condition and expressing our desires before the Lord; 3. the whole frame of the duty more condescending and suteable to our disposition and exigence; 4. fewer distractions, &c.

You will say, it is commonly made, by practical Divines, a mark of hypocrisie to be more enlarged in publick then in private. *Ans.* That mark is especially to be understood of the speaker, and that, 1. when it is alwayes so, and when all his enlargement is in publick; and thus, 2. when the motives and end is selfish and carnal, as respect from, and the applause of, men, &c. But otherwise, both speaker and hearer may meet with more then ordinary enlargement, by the blessing of the Lord, upon the publick Ordinance.

A third question may be this, Whether it be a mercy to have our prayers answered, and to receive the particulars we ask, when we are cold and formal in prayer, and careless and negligent in our walk and conversation? *Ans.* We may judge by the event; for such a dispensation may either, 1. flow from wrath, not pure, (for we do not now speak of the success and prosperity of the wicked) but paternal, penal, by way of castigation, yes, and in some respect judicial; for thus, for a while, they are lulled asleep, and are ready to rest in that state and to be satisfied with such empty performances, because they are accompanied with success: and as Apostate Israel, while in prosperity, said of their enjoyments, *These are*

my rewards which my lovers have given me, Hof. 2. 12. So the Saints themselves, in a fit of distemper, and while under desertion, may think such a dispensation to be a fruit and evidence of love, whileas it were better for them to have their way hedged up with thorns, that they might go and return to their former love, zeal and diligence, Hof. 2. 6, 7. These outward things cannot (m) make us good and happy, and therefore only are good, and become blessings indeed, when they are improved aright, and then only are given in love, when with the blessing and grace to use them to a right end.

(m) Est bonum quod faciat bonum, & est bonum unde faciat bonum.

— habes ergo aurum bonum est, habes non unde fit bonum, sed unde facias bonum, August. de verb. dom. serm. 7.

Or, 2. such a dispensation may flow from love, and that, as it may be an evidence of God's patience, forbearance and tender bowels, which will not be straitned nor overcome by our ingratitude and manifold failings; So also, that it may prove a mean to humble us and melt our hearts, when we consider and compare our wayes with the Lords dealing towards us, and when we see how unequal our wayes have been, and what a base requittal we have made to him for his bounty and tender mercies; thus the Lord established his Covenant and dealt kindly with Israel, that they might remember and be confounded, and never open their mouth any more, because of their shame, when they should see his kindness and tender bowels towards them, Ezek. 16. 60, 61, 62, 63.

CHAP. III.

Whether we may pray for any evil, either of sin or suffering.

Psal. 119. 71. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy Statutes.

Rom. 3. 8. As we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, let us do evil, that good may come, whose damnation is just.

(a) Part. 2.
Ch. 7. Sect. 3.

HAVING (a) shown, that the object of the promises and of our prayers is very ample and large, extending to every thing that is good, either for life or godliness, we (b) promised to enquire here, whether any evil, either of sin or suffering,

suffering were included in the promise ; and might be desired and prayed for ? And, I think , none will deny, that every evil, as such, and *absolutely* considered, is an object of hatred and aversion, and an object of the *threatnings*, and so not of the *promises* ; and therefore, a fit material for *deprecation* and *imprecation*, but not for *prayer* and *supplication*. And on the other hand, I hope, it will not be denied, that as to evil of affliction we may pray for it, 1. *conditionally* thus ; If my heart be so stubborn and hard, that nothing will break it but the rod, if mercies will but harden my heart and prove fewel to feed my lusts, Lord rather let me have the rod than a hard heart; and let me rather want mercies and such and such creature enjoyments, (which is a sort of rod, and may be a very grievous affliction) then they should prove weapons of unrighteousness. And thus, 2. we may pray for such an evil *comparatively*, (for, with the former supposition, there was a sort of comparison) and we may say, Lord rather let me suffer then sin against thee, let me rather lye under any rod and affliction, then under thy wrath for ever : and, with the Emperour (c) *Mauritium*, choose to suffer rather here, then in the life to come ; nay, and of temporal evils, we may thus choose the less, *Nam licet ex duobus malis culpa neutrum, pena tamen minimum est eligendum.* All the controversy then seems to stand in this, Whether we may pray for any evil, either of sin or suffering, (for to one of those two heads may every evil be referred) *relatively*, and in reference to some good and necessary end ? That though neither of these two be good and desirable of themselves, yet, since God, by them, and from them, may bring good to us, and may make them means to humble us and to cause us walk more circumspectly, may we not desire and pray for them in so far as they may be subservient to such an end ? *Ans.* We needed not have moved such a question, were it not, that some weak Saints, upon a mistake, may be ready to pray thus for some rod or affliction ; and that the great School-man (d) *Suarez* affirmeth, that we may desire and ask thus, not only evils of suffering, both to our selves and others, but also temptations. As for his arguments, they

(c) *Hic non in illo seculo, Cluver. hist. in Maurit. pag. 407.*

(d) *Next intrinsece malum patere bonum vel sibi vel alii, nam hac mala erunt simpliciter bona si bene ratione, & propter finem simpliciter bonum appetatur.* Fato: tur tamen hunc modum orandi fortasse non esse omnibus consulendum, cum ipse Paulus ter Dominum rogarit ne stimulo carnis affligeretur, Suarez loc. cit lib. 1. cap. 19.

deserve

deserve no reply, and he makes it his work neither to prove, nor vindicate, but to explain and illustrate this his assertion. But for establishing a right directory of prayer, and for preventing a mistake of the weaker; we shall, 1. bring some arguments for confirmation, and then, 2. answer such objections as we conceived might readily occur, or become an occasion of error: and because the main question will be concerning afflictions (for few or none, I think, will be so impudent as to affirm, that we should desire, or pray for strength to sin, albeit *Scripture* doth mention temptations to sin, amongst those evils he affirmeth we may pray for, and speaks of *Paul's* temptation, 2. *Corinthians* as a thing he might have desired) therefore we shall speak at greater length of suffering and affliction, and only add a word concerning sin, and temptations to sin.

First, As for reasons, 1. that which we may deprecate and pray against, that can be no fit material and object of prayer; but we may deprecate gods and afflictions; and pray (according to that perfect pattern, *Mat. 6: 13*) that we may be (e) delivered from evil of whatsoever nature, whether of sin or suffering; and our Lord Jesus, who knew well what to ask, what to deprecate, not only thus teaches us by his doctrine, and that copy he hath left us; but also by his example to deprecate the cup of suffering and affliction, *Mat. 26: 39*. I deny not, that the Lord can, and often doth sanctifie the furnace to his children, but they themselves must not choose, nor cast themselves into that furnace, but if the Lord determine their particular trial, and call them in his wise providence to encounter it, they should not faint, nor repine, but should submit to the dispensation, and look up to God for the right and sanctified use of it, and for some good of, and fruit by the trial; but that not being the proper and inseparable effect of the rod, and the Lord being able by mercies to work the same, yea, and without any outward dispensation, by the immediate operation of the Spirit on the heart, why should we make choice of such a rough and troublesome way, and take a bitter potion, and draw blood when pleasant cordials will do the turn? Hence,

2. That

1. Arg.

(e) How we may, and should deprecate evils both of sin and suffering. See Mr. Gurnal, loc. cit. pag. 491. & seq.

2. That which is of itself bitter and evil, and frequently accompanied with a bad effect, and driveth the soul farther from God, and to take wicked and desperate courses, that cannot be an object of a regular and reasonable desire: and as it must flow from inconsiderateness, so it would appear to take its rise from our pride, and conceit of our own strength to improve the rod aright, and to make a better use of it than others who have miscarried under it; but humble and considerate Christians would remember how the rod made that King immediately after his sackcloth, 2 King, 6. 30. to fall upon this desperate conclusion, ver. 33. *this evil is of the Lord, what should I wait for the Lord any longer?* How it sent *Saul* (once (f) among the Prophets) to the witch at *Endor*, and at length made him fall upon his own sword, 1 Sam. 28. 8. 1 Sam. 31. 4. And how often it made the people of *Israel* in the wilderness to murmur and rebel against the Lord; nay, as many rods and tryals as they were exercised with, so often did they miscarry and provoke the Lord.

2. Arg.

3. For with-holding and removing of which, we should praise and give thanks to God, that we may not desire and pray for, but it is our duty to praise God for with-holding deserved judgments, and keeping our (g) *tabernacle in peace*, and accordingly the Saints from time to time have made conscience to perform this duty, and it is a provoking sin not to acknowledge his bounty, nor ascribe to him the praise of these outward mercies, and for which he is often provoked to remove them in wrath. Hence,

3. Arg.

4. That which is a token of divine displeasure, and of itself the bitter fruit of sin, ought not be made the object of our desire and prayer; but rods and afflictions are such, and do call us to fasting and mourning, and to run to the Lord by fervent prayer, entreating, that he would remove those tokens of his wrath according to the exhortation, *Psa.* 50. 15. *7am.* 5. 13. &c. And when the Saints remember their former enjoyments, *Job*, chap. 29. they look upon them as great mercies, and their present affliction as a sore and sad trial; and *oh!* (saith *Job*) *that I were as in months past, in the dayes when God preserved me, &c.*

4. Arg.

5. That

whether we may pray for any evil, &c.

5. Arg.
(h) I think
few will joy
with Mr Col-
lings in his
cordials, Part,
2. Sermon. 11.
where he
seemeth to
condemn all
disquietments
of spirits, all
sorrow and
trouble
for eternal
and temporal
things as sin-
full; unless
by sorrow be
understand the
excess and dis-
temper of this
affection,
which was
acted by Christ
purely and
without sin,
Mat. 26. 38.
as for his rea-
son, viz. that
our nature is
so corrupt
that we can-
not act such a
sorrow, but
we shall sin: If it were concludent here, it would as well conclude the acting of all the other
affections of the soul to be sinfull, and that they should be abandoned; but we would rather
think, with this Author, Sermon 2 Page 16, that believers must not be stocks, altogether
senceless of Gods judgments, and dispensations towards them: As for these sinfull grounds
and effects of this sorrow which he mentioneth, Page 141, 142, 144, these may, and should be
guarded against: But why doth he not as well condemn all fear as sinfull? there will be
found to be parity of reason here; and yet he pleads for such a kind of fear as was being sinfull
See Sermon 2. (i) *Quemodo Paulus desideraverit mortem, quam sibi inferre non licuit, statim
videbimus.*

5. That which we may not procure nor bring on, but on
the contrary should labour and strive against, and use all
lawfull means for with-holding when it's feared, and remo-
ving when it's felt, and causeth (h) sorrow, that we may
not desire and pray for; we (i) must not set our hands a
work against our heart and tongue, nor make our prayers
and endeavours to be at such variance and contrariety; but
we may not procure afflictions, nor cast our selves in the fur-
nace, but should use the means for keeping us from, and
bringing our feet out of the fetters; the law of God and na-
ture obligeth us to the duty of self-defence and preservation
from such evils; we will not rashly condemn the practice of
holy men of old, those eminent Martyrs who in the time of
persecution did offer themselves to the flames, not knowing
but they might have been stirred up by an heroick and extra-
ordinary impulse; the Lord intending to make *their ashes the
seed of the Church*, for as their courage and zeal did strength-
en their brethren, and encourage them to stand, So it invited
strangers to come and embrace the faith; but their practice is
no warrant to others, not being in the like case, nor so
moved and strengthened to follow their foot-steps, and even
among them, some by their fall, did leave us a warning to
mind our own frailty, and not to be rash in running upon tri-
als without a call, least our courage fail us while we are in
the waters: And thus, though the great Physician can ex-
tract honey out of the sowrest herbs, and make the most bit-
ter pills medicinal and healthfull to us, yet we are not licen-
ciat to take and prescribe to our selves such a remedy; as na-
ture first and last, sinless and corrupt, abhorreth such a course
and diet, So the Lord whose commands are equal and full of
condescension, hath not made that an object of our choice

If it were concludent here, it would as well conclude the acting of all the other
affections of the soul to be sinfull, and that they should be abandoned; but we would rather
think, with this Author, Sermon 2 Page 16, that believers must not be stocks, altogether
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See Sermon 2. (i) *Quemodo Paulus desideraverit mortem, quam sibi inferre non licuit, statim
videbimus.*

and desire; neither will he prescribe a bitter potion; when cordials are more pertinent, *Ps. (k) Asb. not afflict willingly*; and there is no time when we can say, that the rod would do us more good then mercies, and therefore we must never take upon us to determine, and to prescribe to our selves that which the only Physician of souls hath reserved in his own hand; but supposing his appointment, and while in his holy providence he calleth us to suffer, we are commanded to submit, and patiently bear the chastisement of the Lord, to hearken to the voice of the rod, and to improve it as our talent; but thus it is not made an object of love and desire, but is left to be the matter, and an occasion to exercise our patience, submission and faith; and thus while we are in the furnace, we should pray for the sanctified use of it; and before we be called to the trial, we should prepare for it, and pray that the Lord would fit us for, and do us good by every rod and trial he purposeth to exercise us with; and would make these as well as our mercies contribute for, and all work together for our good, according to that word, *Rom. 8. 28.*

Obj. 1. What God promiseth, that we may pray for, but the Lord promised to hedge up the way of his ancient people with thorns and by cross dispensations to drive them in to their first husband, *Hos. 2. 6, 7.* This is clear (saith a late Author) from *Ps. 89. 31, 32.* where in the midst of the promises, that of visiting their iniquities with rods, is put in the bosom; and if it were believed, that crosses were the accomplishment of the promises, it would help a Christian as much unto submission, and holiness, under the cross. And in both these Scriptures, as frequently elsewhere, threatnings are mixed with promises, and both may well be said to belong to the covenant; the promises as its object, yea, rather as its integral parts, and the threatnings as the hedge to keep us within the bounds of the covenant, and as a word (though sharply) to draw us back when we step aside, and do not perform the conditions to which the promises are annexed; and thus both threatnings and rods (which are the execution of threatnings) to the Saints may be called evangelical, as proceeding from the same fountain from which the promises do flow,

flow, and having a like gracious event and effect; afflictions to them, loss, as it were, their nature and name; and though in themselves they still continue to be bitter and evil, yet to them they prove good, they are fatherly chastisements, and medicinal corrosives, and still the object of the threatening, though as to the sanctified use of them, and the good reaped by them, they may fall under a promise indirectly, & *in obliquo*. But thus not the rod it self, but the fruit of it, is the proper object of the promise, and this may be desired and prayed for.

Q. You will say, that the Saints are *afflicted in faithfulness*, *Psalm 119. 75.* and therefore their crosses must be an accomplishment of some promise. *Ans.* Fidelity and faithfulness appeareth as well in accomplishing threatnings as promises; and thus the Psalmist in the words cited explaineth their scope, while he saith, *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right*, viz. according to thy righteous threatnings; and thus he justifieth the Lord in all the evil afflictions and trials he had met with.

2. *Obj.* What is good may be desired, and may be the object of the promise; but afflictions were good to David, for, saith he, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted*, ver. 71. and gives his reason, ver. 67. and 71. *before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now.* &c. And we may here again argue thus. That which is matter of praise to God, because he hath done it, may be a fit material of our prayers to him, and we may desire that he would do it; but if we view the context, we will find the Psalmist there collecting and gathering together motives and grounds of praise, and he reckoned his afflictions as not the least. *Ans.* The Prophet calls not his afflictions good, they being of themselves evil and bitter, and for removing of which, he prayed most frequently and fervently, and praised God when, and because he removed them; but he saith, that *it was good for him* that he was afflicted, thus pointing out the sanctified use and fruit of the rod, for which he had reason to praise God; yet, and now all things being considered, it was better for him that he was afflicted, than if he had seen no evil; 1. because the evil of the

the rod was now past, but the fruit remained; 2. because that good reaped by it being spiritual, did counter-balance, yea, and far exceed the evil of the cross; it did not only make a compensation, but was as gold instead of brass and dross: But yet still the rod in it self was evil, and not to be desired without a revelation concerning the necessary and fruit of it, which none can pretend to, but must wait till the event make that manifest: And as we should praise God for the sanctified use of the rod, So upon supposition we are to meet with it, we may pray for the same,

3. *Obj.* That which is an evidence of Gods love, and a character of our blessedness, that we may desire and ask; but afflictions are such, *Rev.* 3. 19. *Heb.* 12. 6, 7, 8. *Psa.* 94, 12. *Ans.* Not the rod simply considered, but the sanctified use of the rod, is an evidence of love, and of our happiness; Hence in the words, *Psa.* 94. 12. we have something added to the rod to make it a compleat character of our state, *blessed is the man thou chastenest, and teachest out of thy law.* As if it had been said, albeit the rod alone and without the blessing, can do no good, yet when it is sanctified, &c. And while the Apostle saith, that if we be without chastisement we are bastards, and not sons, he pointeth out the necessity of the cross, both because of our readiness to idolize our mercies, if we meet with no warning, as also because of Gods appointment, that now under the Gospel we should have spiritual mercies in greater abundance then the Jewish Church, but not such a constant affluence of outward things; but not as if we might choose the rod wherewith we should be chastised, or desire and pray for such a particular cross, at such or such a time.

You will say, but may we not then in the general pray for the cross, leaving the particular to Gods choice? *Ans.* No, we may not, for as we know not what, So neither if any rod would do us good; and yet we need not fear least we be bastards for want of chastisements; no Saint ever (I think did, or,) shall want more or fewer, greater or smaller crosses, though they did not meet or prevent them, nor desire or pray for them.

24. *Obj.* That which we may lawfully desire, that we may pray for; but we may, with *Paul*; *Phil.* 1. 23. 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2. desire to be dissolved and depart, and to have the earthly house of this tabernacle pulled down; and if we may desire to encounter with death, that king of terrors; why not also with any other rod? *Ans.* The Apostle doth not make choice of a rod wherewith he might be whipt, only he could be content the day were prevented, and tells us what he could choose if the circumstance of time were referred to his determination; for death is not a rod of our choosing. *It being appointed for all men once to die*, *Heb.* 9. 27. Neither did *Paul* love and desire death, there being nothing in it amiable and desirable, for of its self it is a separation of two near and most intimate friends, the soul and body, and hath most unwelcome fore-runners, companions and consequents, *viz.* pain, sickness, the corruption of the body, &c. But *Paul* desired by any means, and upon any terms to be with Christ, *Phil.* 1. 23. he did not absolutely, but only comparatively desire death, being willing rather to encounter with death (though grievous and terrible) than that bar and impediment should hinder him from a full and immediat fruition Christ; the terrors of death, the dark chambers of the grave, and the corruption of the body were nothing terrible to him, these Anakims could not discourage him who longed so much to take possession of the land of promise; the first fruits he had tasted were so sweet, that he accounted nothing too costly that might bring him to see the harvest; he was content to break-fast on sower herbs, that he might have at dinner a well furnished table that would never be drawn; the Apostle knew well what to choose and desire; he looked on death as an evil and most formidable enemy, 1 *Cor.* 15. 26, 55. *He* desired not it as it was an uncloathing of him, but as it made way for his

(1) Concedit enim nos praesentis vitae solutionem per se naturaliter fugere; quemmodum neque se libenter patitur exui suis vestibus, sed postea subjungit naturalem mortis horrorem superari a fiducia, scilicet non difficultate vestem panno seu sordidam, detritam, laceratamque quibus abiciatur ut eligamus, nimis nova, durabilem emittitur --- fideles sciunt se corpore inclusos veneri tanquam ergastulo, ideo hac vita gravantur quod in ea potiri vana et perfossa beatitudinis nequeant quod peccati servitutem non nisi morte possunt effugere, &c. Calvin, in 1 *Cor.* 5. 4.

better clothing; 2 Cor. 5. 4. he knew it was necessary he should cast off the old rags of the body, before he could put on the rich robes of glory and immortality; he was willing to die, that mortality might be swallowed up of life; he longed to see death, as it was the jailour which only could open the prison door of sin, misery, mortality, absence from the Lord, &c. And thus his desire was not properly terminated in death, only the terror of death did not quench his thirst after a full enjoyment of Christ; and yet we might yield, that he desired death, 1. conditionally; and since there was no other way for him to attain his happiness, he knew this to be a necessary mean for his attaining his end, and upon the supposition of its necessity, by vertue of divine appointment, he might be said to will and desire it; 2. He might be said to desire death comparatively, it being better to encounter that enemy, then to have his perfect happiness suspended; he was willing, as he professeth, 2 Cor. 5. 8. *rather to be absent from the body for a while*. And that we might, 1. conditionally; 2. (*m*) comparatively desire such an evil, we granted in the entry; and thus conditionally and comparatively we may not only desire death, but also a total annihilation and destruction, it being more (*n*) eligible and *better* not to be, then to be in perpetual misery. *Mat. 26.*

24. We might here also alledge *Moses* his desire, that his name should rather be blotted out of Gods book, then that Gods name should be blasphemed by the heathen; who should hear, that he had brought his people out of *Egypt* to destroy them in the wilderness; yea, and rather then the whole body of that people should be destroyed, *Exod. 32*. And *Paul* his wish, that he rather were accursed from Christ, then that his brethren and kinsmen should perish; *Rom. 9*. But these two practices being rather for admiration then imi-

hac controversia a Domino, Mat. 26. 24. quomodo Doff. Twissus, vind. lib. 2. dig. 1. putat Ierosolim locum secundum iudicium hominum, non rectum sed erroneum.

(m) Et quod
sic desidera-
mus non sem-
per licet face-
re.

(n) Quod
præficus non esse
quam miserum
esse multis de-
monstrat Bar-
low contra
Durandum,
Exercit. Me-
saph. exerc. 1.
1. & in termi-
nis determi-
nata videtur

(t) Rom; 8.
18.

table to some Saints to fall into some gross sin, to humble them and awaken them out of their security: No doubt the Lord can make the consideration of our sins to humble us and become more watchfull and circumspect, and thus even make our sins (t) *work together for our good*; which is a demonstration of the wisdom and power of the Physician, and proclaimeth his mercy and tender bowels towards us, that of our venom and poison he can, and sometimes will, make to us a healing plaister; but this is no warrant to us to prescribe such a medicine for our selves, *We may not do evil, that good may come*; Rom. 3. 8.

CHAP. IV.

Of cursing and imprecations.

Whether it be lawfull to pray for vengeance on the wicked, and on persecutors.

Rom. 12. 14. *Bless them which persecute you, bless and curse them.*

(a) Having in the preceeding Chapter enquired, Whether we may desire any evil to our selves or to the people of God, we come now to ask, Whether we may wish and pray for any evil to the wicked and to our enemies?

THERE be (a) here several particulars that need not be brought under debate: 1. That we may pray against the sins of men, and say, with him, Ps. 7. 9. *Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end.* 2. Against the plots, counsels, machinations and interprises of the wicked against the Saints and people of God, his Truth and Ordinances, and say, with him, 1 Sam. 15. 31. *O Lord, I pray thee, defeat the counsel of Ahithophel and turn it into foolishness.* And, Ps. 119. 19. *Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail.* 3. Neither will it be denied, that we may complain to God of all the wrongs and injuries, of the cruel persecution, threatenings and blasphemies of the wicked, with Ezek. 36. 18. 37. David; Plaine the Apostle, 1 Pet. 4. 20. 1 Cor. 12. And this complaint will be found to have something of an imprecation in it; since, while *Elisha* is thus complaining to God, and lamenting *Israel's* apostasy, the prophet saith, that he makes

intercession

intercession against Israel, Rom. 11. 3. 3. Neither, 4. ~~may~~ be denied, that we may pray the Lord to break the snare ~~which~~ ^{whereby} Satan holds them at his work; ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~any~~ ^{any} ~~evil~~ ^{evil} ~~course~~ ^{course}; whereby as with position that otherwise they would prove incorrigible, and if there be no other mean to reclaim them, we may not only pray, that the Lord would not *further their wicked device*, Psa. 140. 8. but also, 5. that they might not prevail, and meet with success in the ordinary works of their hands; yea, and that *the Lord would fill their faces with shame, that they may know themselves to be but men, and might seek his name*, Psa. 83. 16. And, 6. we may pray that justice may be impartially executed upon malefactors, that King and Rulers would resolve, with *David, early to cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord*, Psa. 101. 8. We must so love the life of wicked men, as not to prefer that to Gods law, and the laudable laws of the kingdom, appointing capital punishment for gross crimes and hainous transgressors, that others may be afraid to follow their foot-steps.

On the other hand its certain, that we may not curse, 1. without a cause, *Prov. 26. 2.* Nor, 2. for our own cause, and because of private and personal wrongs done to us; we should thus forgive our brethren, and not give way to the spirit of malice and revenge, *Mat. 6. 15. and 18. 35. &c.* And, 3. we must not curse our relations, nor cast off these bonds, whether natural, civil, or spiritual, under which we stand towards others; children must not upon any terms curse their parents; nor parents their children; people must not curse their rulers and magistrates, nor one Saint another, notwithstanding personal wrongs and injuries mutually received, *Exod. 31. 17. Mat. 15. 4. Exod. 21. 28. 1 Cor. 13. 7. 1 Cor. 6. 7. &c.* And therefore, that cursed crew of passionat creatures, who for a trifle will give their children, servants, or neighbours to the devil, must have their tongues set on fire of hell, *Jam. 3. 6.* and they must be acted by the devil, who is the father of envy, malice, virulency, and of all such cursing, *Jam. 3. 14, 15.*

These things being premised, that which may here fall under debate, is whether we may pray against, though not as they are our enemies, yet as they are Gods ^{enemies} ~~the Church~~ ^{enemies} ~~not~~ for their eternal ruine (as may appear from *Part 1. Chap. 7. Sect. 3.*) yet for their temporal destruction and overthrow, and that either indefinitely, not pitching upon any particular incorporation, or persons, with *Deborah, 5. 31. So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord;* and with the Apostle, *1 Cor. 16. 22. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maledictus.* Or particularly directing our prayers against such and such enemies, as *Judg. 5. 23.* and when there is thus an application to such and such persons, whether we might curse them conditionally, though not absolutely, especially if with the condition a blessing be annexed thus [Lord if these thine enemies be incorrigible, destroy them in thy justice, and if not, reclaim them in thy mercy.] Here, I grant, there are far different cases, and that there is less hazard in praying against Gods enemies, then against our own enemies; and in the general, then condescending upon such or such a faction; and by way of supposition, If they be incorrigible, then absolutely, and upon any terms: Neither would I rashly condemn those learned and judicious Divines, who plead for the lawfulness of such maledictions, yet I should think it a more Gospel-like frame of spirit, to bless and pray for persecutors, then to curse them, *Mat. 5. 44. Rom. 12. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 9.* This wants not that example that Christ left us to follow when he suffered, *1 Pet. 2. 21.* But on the contrary, he left us this pattern, *When we are reviled, not to revile again, and when we suffer, not to threaten, but to commit our selves and our cause to him that judgeth righteously,* ver. 23. What? are not all men our brethren and (b) neighbours? and should we not then love them, and wish their good? how shall we then curse them, and desire their ruine? and if we will not forgive them their injuries done to us, how can we say, *forgive us our sins, as we forgive them that sin against us?* But if we would bless them, and pray for them, that would be an evidence of our sincerity, and that we had over-

(b) Proximus
est omnis ho-
mo. vid. Amel.
loc. cit. pars.
I. cap. 7. qui
fratrem suum
oderit homici-
cida est hoc
loco fratrem
omnem homi-
nem oportet
intelligi, &c.
August. de
sanctis, &c.

come that devil of malice and revenge that rageth in carnal hearts, *Mat. 5. 45, 48. Rom. 12. 19, 20.* Did not Christ at his death pray for his persecutors? *Luk. 23. 34.* and Stephen for those who stoned him? *Act. 7. 60.* And did not David fast and pray for his enemies (though at other times, upon some special account he prayed against them?) *Psa. 35. 13.* Nay, we may here alledge the example of Pagans, when the Athenians commanded their priest to curse *Alcibiades* after he was condemned; nay, saith she, for *I(c) was not consecrated a priest to (d) curse, but to bless?*

But you will say, may we not pray that temporal judgments may be inflicted on persecutors; yea, and that they may fall and never rise again to molest and vex the Saints? *Ans.* There would be a difference put between private persons, and a faction or multitude; for though we may desire that a malefactor may suffer according to the law, yet we may not desire the ruine of a multitude; for though it be an act of justice in the magistrate whom the Lord commissioneth and sends against such a party, to fight against them, yet that sentence cannot be so orderly and deliberately executed against them, as when a process is legally led against a malefactor; and such a dispensation may prove a mean, through the Lords blessing to prevent eternal ruine; but when a wicked faction are killed in battel, death eternal usually followeth their bodily death and overthrow. Yet I deny not, that we should pray for success to the magistrate in such an expedition, and that his enemies may not stand before him; but thus we do it only comparatively, that since matters stand thus, that either they or the magistrate must fall, we are warranted to pray, that rather they meet with the stroke of justice, then that the magistrate and those who are with him should be overthrown in the discharge of their duty; yet abstracting from such an alternative, we should not desire the sudden death and ruin of enemies, but rather that they may be scattered and taken captives, and have time to repent; the rejoycing of the Saints is not their ruine, but in the deliverance of the people of God, and the manifestation of the glory of God in helping his servants, and making

(c) *Dressibus*
non imprecandis;
onibus i consi-
tuta sum (acerv-
dos, apud
Wendelin
Philos. mor.
lib. 1. cap. 10.)
(d) Or by
cursing but by
prayer,

(e) Ps. 76. 10. *the (e) rage of man to praise him, &c.* And there is no question, but that comparatively, and rather we may desire and pray that enemies may fall and be ruined, then that they should prevail and oppress the Church, and blaspheme the holy name of God.

2 Obj.

(f) August.
contra Fau-
stum & lib. 1.
de term. Do-
mini in morte,
cap. 41. optati-
vo (inquis)
modo uti sunt
pro indicati-
vo.

(g) Numb,
11. 15. Job,
6. 9. 1 King,
19. 4. Jer. 20.
15, 17. Jon.
3.

Again, it may be objected, that there be many instances recorded in the word of curses and maledictions uttered by the Saints against their enemies. and on the wicked, as *Dent. 27. 14. &c. 2 Sam. 3. 29. Psa. 59. 12, 13, 14, 15. Psa. 69. 22. &c. Psa. 83. 11. &c. Psa. 109. 6. &c. Psa. 143. 12. Jerem. 17. 18. Lam. 3. 64. Hos. 9. 14. AB. 8. 20. &c. Ans.* We will not say, with (f) *Augustine*, that these were *verba sine pradicantium, sine pradicentium, non vota imprecantium*. And that these holy men did speak so either by way of prophesie & prediction, or by way of commination and denunciation of Gods righteous judgments against implacable enemies; for the words are so clear, that they will admit no such gloss: But we answer, that all that is recorded in the Scriptures concerning the Saints, is not for our imitation; 1. not their sins and infirmities, which are set down rather to be our warning and copy; and as to the present case, who will justifie (g) *Moses, Job, Eliab, Jeremiab* and *Jonab*, their praying against themselves, and cursing the day wherein they were born, and the man who brought tidings of their birth, &c. 2. Neither what they did upon some special occasion or warrant, as in the present case they might not only, 1. know who were implacable enemies and devoted to destruction; but also, 2. have some particular command, or some special impression and impulse upon their spirit, moving and warranting them to pray for such and such judgments to be poured out upon such and such enemies, and then we may suppose, that such prayers poured out by such eminent Saints and Prophets upon such grounds and motives, did flow from a pure zeal to the glory of God, without any mixture of carnal passion, malice and revenge. O! but its hard for us to pray against Gods enemies, especially if they be our enemies, and have wronged us, unless our hearts burn with wrath, envy and rage: and therefore it would appear

to be safest for us not to follow such extraordinary practices, but to walk by the rule commanding us to bless, and not to curse; especially since, 1. we can expect no revelation concerning the final state of any, and so may be ready to curse some elect ones whom the Lord purposeth to bless; and, 2. we cannot expect any extraordinary motion and impulse upon our spirits, unless it come from hell, or from our lusts; *ye know not* (saith our blessed Lord to some of his disciples, who out of a preposterous zeal to imitate *Elias*, would have called for fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans, for not receiving their Master) *what manner of spirits ye are of*, Luk. 9. 55. Let such then as will take upon them to imitate the Prophets in their extraordinary actings, be sure that they are led by the same spirit, and that they can produce the like warrant: But as for humble Christians, who dare not (b) exercise themselves in things too high for them, they would consider, that *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*, Jam. 1. 20. Our wrath and malice against men, may provoke the Lord to become as an enemy to us, and may hinder the execution of his righteous judgments against them, but it can do us no good and them no hurt; O! but if we render good for evil, and blessing for cursing; then will the Lord bless us, and do us good, 1 Pet. 3. 9. and it may be no small comfort to us when we are suffering by them, if, with the Prophet, we can say, *remember, O Lord, that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them who had digged a pit for my soul*, Jerem. 18. 20. Nay, according to the son of (i) *Sirack*, we must not curse Sathan, and who curseth him curseth his own soul; and the Scriptures of truth tells us, that *Michael the Archangel durst not bring against him a railing accusation*; and shall we then dare to bring any railing accusation against our brethren and neighbours? Which (saith (k) *An-*

(h) Ps. 13 1; 12

(l) Eccles. 31: 27.

(k) Tu quis es qui non diligis? mihi tu qui oras ut homo moriatur, malum oras contra malum, & facti estis duo mali, ille male agendo; tu, male orando; tu malum orando incipis

esse quando dicis, Deus occide malum... &c. facis iudicem & Deum quavis esse tortorem, respondet tibi Deus, nonne me in tuis malis operibus irritasti, &c. quare si voluntatem tuam haberem, te prius occiderem antequam venires, si tunc te occidisset inimicum, quid ergo male orando doces me quod non feceris te? &c. August. de audis serm. 4. serm. 10. fol. 256a

(fin)

(*Fin*) thou prayest for evil to thine enemy, thou thy self becomest evil, as he was evil by doing wrong, So thou now by praying wrong; and now thou takest to thee Gods office, and becomest a judge pronouncing the sentence, and wouldst have him to be the executioner and liſſor; but if the Lord had thus dealt with thee when thou wronged him and became his enemy, thou had not now been so complain of thy brother; ah! Why dost thou desire the Lord to do that to others, which he hath not done to thee? Were it not better to imitate our Saviour on the cross, pitying and praying for his enemies, &c.

(a) When, and how often,

(b) Ἀ' δια-
δοκίμας in-
definitum,
fine intermiſſi-
one.

(c) Πάποτε,
semper, bag
pariicula (im-
quit liegh) &
de loco & de
tempore dici-
tur.

(d) Ἀβ' ἰυχὴ
preces.

(e) Ἀβ' ἐὺφρη-
μίας laudes
bona verba.

(f) ἡλγ
orate child.
inde methsa-
lim in beno-
ni, piel precan-
tes & Grati
euphrias
causa ἡσάδο
in gemitum
signa com mu-
tarum.

(g) Because
they honour
one of their
number who
was killed by
a soldier,
and accounts
him a famous Martyr.

When, how often, and how long, or how much time should be spent in prayer?

CHAP. V.

1 Thes. 5. 17. Pray without ceasing

WE shall speak to the first two branches of the question jointly, (a) both being determined by the Apostle, while he exhorted us to pray continually, (b) or without ceasing, 1 Thes. 5. 17. And our blessed Lord Jesus propoundeth a parable to this very purpose and end, that men ought (c) alwaies to pray, and not faint, Luk. 18. 1. so also, Luk. 21. 36. And the Apostle, Rom. 12. 12. Eph. 6. 18. Col. 4. 2. &c. But you will say, what is that to pray alwaies and without ceasing. Ans. 1. We need not spend much time in confuting the old, (d) Enchirites, (e) Euphemists, and (f) Messalians, who are reckoned among the ancient hereticks, because mistaking the scope and genuine sense of these words, and looking to the meer letter, they did from thence conclude, that Christians should spend all their time in prayer, and never leave off that heavenly exercise. I find these poor deluded men also called in reproach by many other names, as (g) Martyrians (h) Enthusiasts, yea, and

(i) Satanists.

(i) *Satanici*. These are said to have lived under the Emperours *Valentinian* and *Valens*. I do not deny, that I plead for this conceit, as having a great shew of zeal and holiness; and thus *Alf. (k) de Castro, Danæus*, Mr. *Ros* and others, do father upon the poor *Euchites* many absurd and ridiculous opinions, but if any did only plead, that we should continue in prayer without interruption, though I would pity such a one, as being under a strange delusion, yet I would be loath to rank him in among the hereticks; it hath been *Sathans* design from time to time to make many hereticks and schismaticks, as by infusing the venome of pernicious errors into the hearts of men, and sending them abroad to spread that deadly poyson; so also by stirring up the orthodox and zealous Christians (whom he and his instruments were not able to seduce and draw from the truth) to over-do in opposing these errors, as by mis-constructions, jealousies, bitter and approbrious speeches, personal reflections, and upon the least difference in matters of religion to account and call men hereticks; thus making the breach greater, and driving them (who in the (l) spirit of meekness might have been gained and reclaimed) to strange courses and practises, for the maintaining of which, they fell upon strange principles and more dangerous errors then what at first occasioned the rent and schisme: As there be too many of the Popes canonized saints, of whom we may fear the worst, So there may be many in heaven, who are standing in (m) *Irenæus, Austin, Epiphanius*, and *Theodoret* their catalogue of hereticks.

But to return to the error of the *Euchites*, 1. the practice of Christ and his Apostles, of the Prophets, and of all the Saints in all ages; 2. the variety of lawfull callings, requiring a considerable part of time to be allowed for them; 3. the many talents we have received to be otherwise employed and laid out; 4. the natural temper and condition of the body requiring daily refreshment, by eating drinking, sleeping, and moderat recreations; 5. our manifold necessities and wants, which must be supplied by our care, labour

(i) Mr. *Ros* *Hayes*. pag. 208. *Alf. de Castro* advers. *bar. lib. 11. pag. 747.* and Mr. *Ros* affirmeth, that they worshipped the devil that he might do them no hurt. So also *Danæus* in *lib. August. de heres. in cap. 57.* (k) *loc. cit.*

(l) *Gal. 6. 1.* (m) To speak nothing of the popish heresiographers, where the orthodox and most eminent Christians are reckoned to be the grossest hereticks.

and diligence ; 6. the frailty and weakness of the strongest Saint on earth , and his inability to persevere in spiritual exercises without intermission : 7. the reserve in frienships towards God and man , which we are obliged to perform in their season , and when the Lord in his providence offers us an occasion , and calls us to the doing of them ; and , 8. the variety and multiplicity of other spiritual exercises , as meditation , conference , hearing , reading , &c. do so clearly discover the vanity of this dream , that we need not dwell any longer on that head ; especially since the experience of the owners and abettors of that errour (if *(n)* ever there were any such) might serve to convince them , how impossible it is to walk by that rule for the space of one day.

But *(o)* *Alfon. de Castro* , with this mentioneth a far more dangerous heresie , which he fathereth upon *(p)* *Pelagius* , viz. That it is needless and unprofitable to pray to God , since we are masters of our own lot , and have power and free will to do what we will : Albeit we would be ashamed to undertake the vindication of *Pelagius* (though supposed to be our country-man) knowing his doctrine to be most dangerous and pernicious , yet it can hardly be thought , that he should have the impudence as to profess such an abominable absurdity ; but his writings not being extant , it is not easie to determine what he maintained in this particular ; but *Jesuits* and *Arminians* , who are reputed to be his disciples , disclaim this impious dream ; albeit the orthodox by a just and necessary consequence labour to fasten it upon them , as flowing from their principles concerning the power of free will , and the indifferency and inefficacy of divine providence : And I should think , that their patron *Pelagius* , can no otherwise

(n) The first
relater upon
a mistake
might occasion
the mistake of
others , and so
from hand to
hand it might
come to us.

(o) *Alf. de*
Castro loc.

cit. bar. 3.

pag. 749.

(p) But he
resterb not on
him , but
will have

Witleff, Huf, Luther and other orthodox Divines to maintain that impious tenet , viz. because they assert the efficacy of divine providence , and upon this account he should have proceeded to his brethren the Dominicans , who herein do joyne with orthodox Divines.

otherwise be said to have maintained the same; and the (q) testimony which a *Cassro* citeth from *Austin*, to prove this to have been *Pelagius* opinion, doth say no more, but that his doctrine did destroy the necessity of prayer. But though there be few or none who have the forehead to avouch such an atheistical tenet, yet alas! it is practically owned by too many, and multitudes of orthodox professors are pestered with this heresie; for all such as restrain prayer, and make no conscience to call upon God, do in effect, and in Gods esteem, joyn with those Atheists, who said, *is it vain to serve God; and what should it profit us to pray to him?* Mal. 3. 14. Job, 21. 15.

Having thus spoken a little to these two extremes, now come we to enquire more narrowly after the meaning and genuine sense of the former exhortations, and to satisfy the case propounded; and, 1. some (r) affirm, that the scope of these words is to perswade us to be liberal to the poor, that they may alwaies pray for us, that by their prayers procured by our liberality and almes, we may be said to pray alwaies: But, 1. many have not whereupon to bestow so liberally to the poor; 2. neither do the poor alwaies pray for their benefactors; 3. if we speak of our ordinary beggars, their lip-devotion and mock-prayers, is a grievous provocation, and a profanation of the holy name of God; 4. we may not substitute a suffragan in the exercises of religion, nor think that their actions shall be reckoned to us while we do not concur and act with them, whatever profit may redound to us by the prayers of others, yet this doth not liberate us of any (s) part of our duty to pray for our selves; the command to pray (as the other commands and exhortations in the Word)

(q) He citeth *Austin* de hæresibus, and I find he place he pointeth at to be cap. 88. ubi hæc habet *Aug.* destruit etiam orationes quas facit ecclesia sive pro infidelibus ut convertantur, sive pro fidelibus ut augetur eis fides, & perseverent in ea hæc quippe non a Deo accipere: sed a seipsis homines habere: et tendunt, hæc *Aug.* de hæz. cap. 88. But I find a more full and particular testimony to this purpose, Epist. 92. which yet doth only shew that according

to *Pelagius* doctrine, it will follow, that two petitions of the Lords prayer are needless, viz. forgive us our sins, and lead us not into temptation, nova hæresis & nimium perniciofa (inquits) tempestas surgere inimicorum gratiæ Christi capie, qui nobis etiam dominicam orationem in piis disputationibus conantur auferre &c. vid. loc. hinc epistola etiam subscribens patres Concil. Milevitani, vid. etiam epist. 94. (r) Apud *Salmeron* com. in evang. tom. 7. tract. 3. 1. in parab. (s) Or for any time, (so that then we may abstain, because others are employed for us

is personal, and concerneth every particular man and woman; its a popish trick to substitute deputies in the matters of God; such as will intrust their salvation to the care and diligence of others, would take heed, least as others work for them, So they be crowned for them: *every one*, without exception of whatsoever rank or degree, *must* (1) *Work out his own salvation*, Phil. 2. 12.

(1) Our work is the way in which we must walk to heaven, but not our money (as Papists dream) where by we may purchase a possession there.

(u) *Apud Salmer. loc. cit. pag. 134.*

2. (u) Others think that they may be said to pray alwaies, who have resigned themselves to God, and refer all their actions to his glory, who hearken to the exhortation, 1 Cor. 10. 31. and who endeavour in all their waies to approve themselves to God, and *whether they eat or drink, or whatsoever they do, to do all to the glory of God*; but this being so far sought, and so impertinent for clearing the present difficulty, it deserveth no refutation; especially since it is so general, and no more concerneth prayer then any other performance.

A third conjecture, much like to the former, is, that *he* (x) *leaveth not off to pray, who constantly doth well*. This is an old saying, and brought by many for loosing the present knot; the most ancient writer of those, I have known thus to interpret those Scriptures, is the famous (y) *Austin*, and he who wrote (z) the old gloss, whom the (a) *Rhemists* and several other popish commentators do follow. But thus faith is confounded with other duties, and the scope and sense of the words grossly (b) mistaken, which do clearly hold out and recommend to us the practice of a particular duty.

(x) *Non definit orare qui non definit bene facere.*

(y) *Aug. loc. infra cit.*

(z) *Gloss. ord. in Luk. 18. 1. & 1 Thes. 5. 17.*

(a) *We should pray alwaies*

by faith, hope and charity, and by working the things that be acceptable to God. *Rhemist. on Luk. 18. 1. vid. etiam Aug. epist. 121. cap. 9. & Beda in Luc. 18. (b) Sed quamvis non inepte dici possent opera bona genus quoddam orationis, quoniam Deum ad misericordiam provocant, quemadmodum & mala opera clamant ad Deum, & iram ac furorem ejus accendunt, tamen hoc non proprie Dominum voluisse, cum ait oportet semper orare perspicuum est, &c. Bellar. loc. cit. cap. 9. (c) Beda in Luk. 18. 1. discendum est omnia quae iustum ac iudicium Deum gerit & dicte ad orationem esse referenda*

prepareth and fitteth us for prayer, and when we exercise our selves in other spiritual performances for that very purpose, that we may be the more enabled to pray: But though we grant, that there is a connexion among spiritual exercises, so that one may fit and prepare for another; yet there is a difference and separation, and we may be employed in one, when we do not mind another; and as other spiritual performances may be helps to prayer, So prayer may prepare the heart for going about them; and yet we cannot be said to perform them when we are praying, and wherefore should we be said more to pray when we are employed in them? and the words do manifestly speak of prayer as contradicting from other duties.

A fifth conjecture, is that of the learned (c) *Austine*, who thinketh that we should alwaies pray, because we should alwaies desire eternal life; its true, the desire of the soul is the life of prayer, and that Christians (d) virtually, habitually, and as to the general bent and main inclination of the heart, may be said alwaies to desire eternal life; but it is as impossible at all times actually to desire eternal life, as alwaies to pray, and expressly direct that desire to God.

But, 6. that opinion, I find to be most common among popish (e) writers, is, that he may be said to pray alwaies, who prayeth in the canonical hours appointed by the Doctors of the Roman Church; we will not now digress to speak of their divine office (as they call it) and canonical hours, in which the (f) great *Suarez* hath employed almost a whole book; and though *Bellarmino* speak to that head in some few Chapters, yet he sends (g) his reader to one *Marcellus Francolinus*, who (as he reporteth) hath written a large volume upon that subject; but, I would ask,

(c) *Mauer*
namque virtutem
hujus desiderii
in omnibus
quæ ex charitate
facimus,
Jo. de Thab
bia in voc.
crare vid. etiam,
Tho. 2. 2.
quæst. 83.
art. 14.

(d) Sine intermissione
orare quid est
aliud quam
beatam vitam
ab eo qui eam
solus dare potest
sine intermissione
desiderare? (cuius)
per ergo hanc

a Domino desideremus, & oremus semper. August. *epist. 221. cap. 9.* & ven. Beda in collect. ex Aug. in *epist. 1. ad Thes. 5. 17.* continuum desiderium continua oratio — quicquid aliud agis si desideras illud sabbatum, non intermisisti orare — frigus caritatis silentium cordis est, stigmata caritatis clauduntur. (e) Beda in *Luc. 18. 1.* Alf. a Castro loc. cit. Salmeron loc. cit. gloss. and. Lyra and the Remission *Luk. 18. 1.* Rainerius in voc. oratio, cap. 7. Lessius de iustitia & jure, lib. 2. cap. 37. lect. 23. & alii passim (f) *Viz. tom. 2. de iust. & stat. rel. lib. 1.* (g) Bell. de bonis oper. in partic. lib. 1. cap. 11.

where the Saints are said to pray alwaies, and to ask such and such a particular without ceasing, whereas it is evident from the very context, that they did not, could not, without intermission continue in that exercise; though ordinarily and frequently they did so; thus, *Act. 10. 2.* its said that *Cornelius* prayed *(1)* alway; and yet he was a centurion, and must needs have been much employed in military affairs; thus also *Paul* professeth, that he prayed for the *Corinthians (m)* alwaies, or without ceasing, *1 Cor. 1. 4.* and alwaies *(n)* for the *Colossians, Col. 1. 3.* and *(o)* alwaies for the *Thessalonians, 1 Thes. 1. 3.* and *2 Thes. 1. 11.* and *(p)* alwaies for the *Romans, Rom. 1. 9.* thus also the Apostle *Peter* professeth, that he will put those Christians to, whom he wrote, *(q)* alwaies in remembrance of those things which he had then mentioned, *2 Pet. 1. 12.* And will any be so absurd as to imagine, that the Apostle did nothing else but continually incite and repeat those things to them; but he tells them, that he would often, and frequently thus admonish them; and zealous *Paul* sheweth those to, whom he wrote, that ordinarily and frequently he prayed for them. And thus it is evident, that to pray frequently, is to pray *(r)* alwaies; and I find *(s)* many judicious and learned Expositors thus to interpret this exhortation. *1 Cor. 1. 4.* If to frequency be added *universality, constancy* and *equability*, there will be found yet some greater reason for this expression; and that it is so in this case, yea, and that there is not one, but diverse kinds of universality here, shall forthwith appear. And, 1. there is required an universality in respect of the *object*; we must not only in some few things; but in every thing, by prayer supplication and thanksgiving, make our requests known to God, *Phil. 4. 6.* Hypocrites will in their affliction seek God early, when fear is upon them, God will hear from them, but otherwise they forget God, and do not regard the work

(1) Διά παν-
τός.

(m) Πάντα-
τε.

(n) Ἀδια-
λειπτώς.

(o) Ἀεὶ.

(p) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(q) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(r) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(s) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(t) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(u) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(v) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(w) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(x) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(y) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(z) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(aa) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(ab) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(ac) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(ad) Ὡς ἡμέ-
ρας.

(ae) Ὡς ἡμέ-
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of his hand; but the Saints, as at all times, So in every thing, will present their requests to God, knowing, that every (s) creature must be sanctified by the Word and blessing of God, and by prayer, 1 Tim. 4. 3, 5. Ah! did sinners know their danger, not only from Satan, but from the meanest of the creatures, they would not go abroad without the shield of prayer? A stone lying in thy way, may occasion thy neck-break, and the least morsel of bread thou puttest in thy mouth may choak thee; O! what a mercy then must it be to have the very stones and beasts of the field in league and at peace with us? Job, 5. 23. and how careful should we be to improve this covenant by frequent prayer to him, who is the preserver of man and (u) beast.

3. There is an universality in respect of time, and that being the most proper and pertinent to the present purpose, we will insist on it at greatest length; for, if it can be made appear that we should pray at all times, it will be manifest, that we ought to pray always. Now as time in humane (x) writings, So also in Scripture is put to signify the fit season, occasion and opportunity of doing, as frequently in the book of Ecclesiastes; and as there is a season and fit time for every thing and purpose under the heaven, in which is beautiful, Eccles. 3. 1, 11. So prayer hath its seasons and fit time in which it should be performed, and in which it will be beautiful, and an (y) odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing to God. And as it doth very much contribute to the beauty and acceptance of prayer, that it be performed seasonably, So we are obliged to observe and improve every season and opportunity; when ever the Lord opens the door and calls upon us, either by his word or work, if we do not answer his call, and improve this talent, then are we sinfully deficient, and omit our duty; when we let the fit season and opportunity of doing pass, then are we idle and negligent, and then become we guilty and culpable: And thus the (z) moralists and School-mendos rightly teach, that an omission cannot be imputed to us, but when we are called and obliged to do, and do not; or when we suffer the occasion and season of doing to pass: yea, they

(s) Hude colligendum est impurum esse usurpationem omnium donorum Dei nisi ad se vera cognitio & incoercatio nominis Dei, ac bel-linum esse vescenti morem, quoniam homines sine ulla precatione ad mensam se ingerunt ac bene saturati sepulta Dei mentione alio se prorsum, Calv. in 1 Tim. 4. 5: (u) Ps. 36. 6. (x) And in all languages, thus the Latin tempus, the Greek and the Hebrew doth signify the fit season and opportunity.

(y) Phil. 4. 18. (z) Vid. scholastic in 1. 2. de hac questione suscitatur forte disputamus locum.

they do not only affirm, that otherwise an omission is not imputed as our sin, but that it should not upon any account be imputed to us, or esteemed ours, and therefore ought not, in respect of us, fall under any moral denomination, or be accounted voluntary or free, neither should we in respect of it come under any moral consideration, or by it be thus denominated: And if it were not thus (at least as to any culpable imputation, which is the point we now press) how many thousand omissions of good might every moment be charged, not only upon weak sinfull men, but also upon the glorious and holy Angels, who are able to do many things which they do not, for want of this call and opportunity of doing. Hence, since the omission and not doing of any duty cannot be imputed to us as an interruption or intermission on our part, except when we are (a) obliged, called, and have a fit opportunity to do; therefore it is evident, that we may be well said to do *always*, what we do at all times and seasons of doing; and that he may be said as to pray *always*, So *without ceasing*, who prayeth as oft as he hath opportunity, and is called to that exercise; for thus there is a moral continuation without any ceasing or intermission on his part, he being then only concerned in that duty, when the fit season is offered, and then he will *always* be doing.

(a) *Præcepta affirmativa obligant semper, sed non ad semper, & ideo solum pro tempore illo aliquis cessando ab actu peccat, pro quo præceptum affirmativum obligat.*
 Thom. 1. 2. quæst. 71. art. 5. ad 3. vid. etiam quæst. 100. art. 10

But you will ask, what be these seasons of prayer which we must observe and improve? *Ans.* There is a twofold season of prayer, one *constant*, another *occasional*; 1. then as to the constant season of prayer, which every Christian should daily make use of, albeit we will not limit or prescribe to the Saints, yet we hope, that without hazard of a challenge from any sober Divine, we may affirm, that the least which the word of God will admit for a set course of prayer, is twice a day; as our daily wants, necessities, trials, temptations, will so often, at least send us to the throne for a supply, protection, deliverance, &c. So our mercies for their continuance and the sanctified use of them; and if we have the heart of Children, we must so often at least visit and speak with our Father; and if we be sensible of our enjoyments

enjoyments, and of his mercy and tender bowels, we will so often, at least, offer to him the sacrifice of praise, &c. And we cannot be said to do (b) alwaies, what we do not often and frequently; and can he be said to pray often or frequently, who doth not at least keep a constant course of praying twice a day?

(b) As in the preceding conclusion hath been shown.

But if it be askt what time of the day is fittest? *Ans.* Though we will not be peremptory in fixing upon any part of time, yet it would appear, that evening and morning were the fittest seasons; is it not equal, that we begin and end the day in Gods worship and service? and how dare we sleep untill we commend our selves, and all that is ours to the care and custody of our Father? and how dare we put our hands to any work in the morning till we praise him for our preservation in the night past, and beg his blessing on the works of that day? and thus both our need, and the honour of our Master call for this; for what we highly prize and love dearly, will get the first and last of our thoughts, it will, as it were, sleep and awake with us; and shall not the Lord have that room in our heart? is there any better object to fill it? and can the first and last of our time be better employed? The Jewish daily sacrifice was appointed to be offered in the morning and evening, *Exod.* 29. 39. and these are fit seasons for the Christian sacrifice, and accordingly the Saints from time to time have observed those seasons, though with some variety: But I should think, that as the morning and evening, So the first of the morning, and the last at night were due to the Lord; and if our calling, or some occasional diversion, do hinder the family from meeting together, every one should then go to their closet, and pour out their soul before the Lord, till the family may most conveniently meet together to joyn in that exercise.

But ye may yet ask, what warrant we have from the Scriptures to press this? *Ans.* We did not say, that this was all which the Scripture doth require, but that this was. The least which from thence could be allowed and established. The Lord in his Word requireth, that we should pray alway and without ceasing, but doth not determine how oft, that

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Ans.

albeit we should set some bounds and limits to our loose, vain & idle hearts, which otherwise would be ready upon any trifling occasion to slight and omit that duty, yet that we should not rest (as to private converse with God) upon any number, nor thus stint and limite our selves; though we should have our constant course of prayer morning and evening at least, yet as to the occasional seasons of prayer, we should be liberal and free, still labouring to enlarge our selves more and more in this sweet and heavenly exercise, resolving (with the Psalmist in the point of praising God, *Psa. 71. 14.*) still to *pray more and more*; and here the Lord would leave some liberty and latitude, according to the variety of our callings and employments in the world, and according to the occasions and opportunities which in his providence he would offer; for, as some in respect of their calling and condition have more, some less time to spare, So one and the same Saint may now meet with more occasions and motives, then at another time, and as thus there is a great variety as to the nature of the thing, and occurring circumstances, and no rule in the Word that doth precisely limit and determine how oft, So neither is there any equality, as to this, among the examples recorded in the Word; neither is it usual there to condescend upon any number, for as occasions are thus so variable, So accordingly hath the carriage and practice of the Saints been, but as to their set and constant course, we will find some few instances, and yet with some variety. Thus the servant of God, *David*, though a King upon whom so much care and business did lye, yet professeth, that *(c)* *seven times a day he praised* (and who will doubt whether then also he prayed? to) *God*, *Psa. 119. 164.* And *Daniel* though a Ruler, and much employed at Court, yet would not neglect to *pray three times a day*, *Dan. 6. 10.* and the Psalmist, I think, determines what these times were, while he promiseth to *call upon God evening and morning, and at noon*, *Psa. 55. 17.* And of the Elect it is indefinitely said, *that they cry to God day and night*, *Luk. 18. 7.* &c And so much of a constant course of prayer, to be performed at set, fixed and appointed times.

(c) Septies
i. e. pluries,
Musc. in loc.
See also Diod:
and others;
but though we
did grant, that
here there is a
definite num-
ber put for an
indefinite, yet
it will not fol-
low, that the
greater is put
for the less;
but rather, on
the contrary,
that the less is
put for the
greater.

Now come we, 2. to speak of occasional seasons of prayer; it is not (d) enough to fix and observe set times for prayer, but we must be always ready, and from time to time watch and discern such opportunities as the Lord occasionally in his wise providence offereth, that we may improve them; we must not only publicly, with the family, and privately in our closet, keep a constant course of prayer, but we must also lay hold on every occasion, invitation and message from heaven, and it must be a grievous provocation, to slight such an opportunity; when the King is upon the throne, and sends a messenger to invite thee to come, when he openeth the door, and holds forth the golden scepter to thee, assuring thee of acceptance and audience, if thou do not answer when he thus calleth to thee, may he not justly suffer thee to knock and cry, and not hear, nor answer? according to the threatening, *Prov.* 1. 28. and therefore if the Lord put such a (e) price in thy hand, and thou wilt not improve it, that is an evidence of thy folly; for, what knoweth thou, O man, but this may be the acceptable time, in which the Lord may be found? and if thou let it pass, what knowest thou if ever thou meet with such a season? Now there be several times and seasons, in which the Lord useth to visit and draw near to his people; and it were our wisdom, as it is our duty, to call upon him while he is so near, *Isa.* 55. 6. its a fit time to offer our supplication to the King when he comes and makes a visit to us.

You will say, but how shall we know when the Lord draweth nigh to us? and whereby shall we discern his approach? *Ans.* The Lord in the Scriptures is said to visit his children several waies, which (as to our purpose) may be referred to these three general heads; he visits us, 1. by his mercies and benefits; 2. by his rods and judgments; and, 3. by the inward work and motions of his Spirit: O I then when ever thou meetest with any new mercy; and if thy former enjoyments be continued, especially in the day of trial; or if thou meet with any stroke, and art in any strait, danger or difficulty; or if the Lord make thee hear a voice within,

SSSS 2,

though

(d) *Nec tantum statutis horis & praefinitis, sed quoque vis tempore, &c. Theophil. in Eph. 6. 18.*

(e) *Prov. 17. 16.*

(f) Pl. 27. 8.

though there were no new occurrence, yet if the Lord speak to thy heart, and say to thee, O I it were fit now to draw nigh to God, if thy conscience (which is Gods depute) challenge thee for thy unkindness, and invite thee to the throne, &c. in these and such like occasions, thou art obliged in a special manner to (f) seek Gods face; but yet its not enough to improve these special seasons, but though no new occasion, or special invitation were offered, yet, 1. because of the hazard we alwaies stand in from Sathan, our lusts, and an alluring and bewitching world; 2. because of our old, and from day to day, a new contracted guiltiness; 3. because of the continual need we stand in of a new supply of grace for doing our duty; 4. because of the many mercies both spiritual and temporal which we enjoy; and, 5. least by our negligence, and distance from the Spirit of life, deadness and indisposition creep on, &c. Whensoever we meet with any time of solitariness, and are taken off from business, and out of the croud of worldly entanglements, that is a fit season for conversing with God, and trading with heaven; such a secret trade may prove very advantagious, and soul-enriching; *when the King is held in the galleries, that is a time for delights*, Cant. 7. 5. 6. O I what liberty and spiritual freedom will the soul use and express, and what boldness and importunity, and what heart-ravishing impressions will it find in a secret communion with its beloved? O I the sweetness and satisfaction, the soul enjoyeth in those secret walks and turns with the King in the galleries: yea, and the King himself is pleased to express his delight in the secret voices of the spouse, *rise up my love, my fair one, and come away* (as it were out of the croud of the world, and let us go apart) *O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for, sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely*, Cant. 2. 13, 14. Its true, the voice of the beloved is sweet where ever its heard, in the market place, in the concourse and publick assemblies, thou mayest expect to meet with some discoveries of him; there thou mayest behold much of his glory and beauty, Ps. 27. 4.

Ps. 63. 2. &c. And we will not now make a comparison between publick and private ordinances; but if all thy religion consist in publick performances, its an evidence thou never yet reaped the fruit of any publick ordinance, for that would drive thee into thy closet, and make thee more frequent and fervent in thy private addresse^s, where thou mayest be (g) *feasted with fat things full of marrow, and wines on the lees well refined*; but if thou neglect a secret communion with God, no wonder though leanness be upon thy soul.

(g) *Isa. 25. 6.*

But you will say, how often should we thus draw nigh to God? *Ans.* The case it self, if duly pondred, might prevent and exclude such a question; 1. because it speaketh of our occasional addresse^s to God, and occasions being so variable; there can be, as to them, no determination; 2. because this part of the question is opposit to the former, which did hold out a constant course; and therefore here we can only in the general say, that frequency is required; but will not limite any Christian to a set and determinat numbers. But since there is here a great latitude, we would consider what should be our measure: as those whom the Lord hath freed from the drudgery employments of the world, have much more time to spare, then ordinary trades-men and labourers, So they must one day answer for that precious talent of time, how it hath been employed.

And thus if we improve every season of prayer, whether set, or occasional; if we pray at all occasions, and so oft as we have opportunity, we pray continually and without ceasing, because we omit no season or opportunity of doing; yea, if any one sort of seasons were observed, that might be ground enough for such an expression; and, 1. as to the set and ordinary season, thus *Mephibosheth* is said to eat bread at *Dauids* table alwaies, 2 *Sam. 9. 7, 10.* And *Jehoiachin* to eat continually before the King of *Babylon*, 2 *King. 25. 19.* *Mephibosheth* and *Jehoiachin* are said to eat alway and continually, where they did eat ordinarily, and at the usual time of eating: And thus also (in a case much like to the present) *Exod. 29. 41.* the *daily sacrifice*, is called a *continual burnt offering*; and thus the learned (h) *Austine* thinketh

(h) *Quum Dominus dix-
erit, oportet
semper orare,
& non desin-
cere: Et Apo-
stolus, sine in-
termissione
orate, sanctissi-
mo sic accipit-
ur, ut nullo
die intermit-
tantur certa
tempora oran-
di, Aug. de
basil. cap. 57.*

thinketh the most genuine interpretation of the exhortation to pray alwaies, to be [that we should daily keep a constant course of prayer.] And then, 2. as to an occasional season of doing; though very accidental and variable, yet if it be observed, it will warrant such an universality; and thus *Solomons* servants are said to *stand continually before him*, 1 King. 10. 8. while as they did either stand, or walk, go, or come as occasion required, and their place and employment called them to: And thus it may appear, that to do a thing in its season, and when the fit opportunity (whether set or occasional) doth offer, is according to the phrase of Scripture, to do ever, alway, continually, or without ceasing, especially when both seasons concur, and are observed, as ought to be in the present case.

3. There is here an universality in respect of the *subject*, the supplicant his condition, state and exigence; so that thus to pray alwaies is nothing else, but to pray in every condition; in (i) prosperity, in adversity, in the time of health and sickness, &c. *Is any afflicted, let him pray*, Jam. 5. 13. hath any man an abundance of creature-comforts and enjoyments, let him pray for the blessing, the sanctified use, and continuance of them, 1 Tim. 3. 4, 5. Prayer is a medicine for every malady, a tool for every trade, and a companion in every state and condition, *its (k) useful for all things*, and its our duty to improve and use it at (l) all times.

Concl. 5. To pray continually importeth *perseverance* in that exercise; that we must not leave off and give over praying till we prevail, and till the Lord declare his mind, either by giving the particular, or removing the occasion, and all ground of hope: *Pleaders at the throne of Grace*, must alwaies attend their cause. See *Part 2. Chap. 2. Pag. 484.* *We must not (m) Ruinerins* so pray alwaies, as if we might never be otherwise employed, but that we may never

(i) In omni tempore, perinde valet, atque tam secundis rebus, quam adversis, Calvin in Eph. 6. 18: (k) 1 Tim. 4. 8.

(l) In every time of need, (saith Dr. Hammond on Eph. 6. 18.) and what is this condition and state that doth not need and require

the help of prayer? (m) Cum Christus dicat oportet semper orare et non desicere, non interdit quod nunquam interrumpatur assus orationis, sed quod non interrumpatur quasi nunquam resumpturus; sicut faciunt quidam, qui statim ut non exaudiuntur a Deo, ab oratione desistunt, Rain. partib. de orat. cap. 7.

go away from that duty, with a purpose not to return; as may appear from that parable, *Luk. 18.* propounded for this very end, that we might learn by the example of that importunate widow, from time to time to renew our requests, and not weary nor faint till we obtain our desire; the season of praying doth not expire, till the day the Lord hear and answer our desire: and as such honest and importunate supplicants will not take, So they will not get a nay-say, *Luk. 18. 7.* And here is a good evidence of sincerity, if delays do not drive us from the throne; for though carnal hearts may adventure for once or twice, and take (as it were) a trial of Gods service, the truth of the promises, and the success of prayer, yet when they see no in-come, they quickly weary; *the hypocrit will not alwaies call upon God, Job. 27. 10.* The begger goeth from the door before the almes be come, and so looſeth his labour; but the Saints will cry again and again, and wait and not weary till God shew mercy upon them; yea, when they obtain what they desired, (n) their work is not done, as they must pray till they prevail, and get an answer, So after the Lord hath heard them, and filled their hands, their mouth must be filled with his praise, *Psa. 50. 15. Job. 22. 27. Psa. 66. 13, 14.* What we get by prayer, must be used with thanksgiving, that it may prove a solid and stable mercy; and thus, as we must pray the Lord to give, So after he hath given, we must pray, that he would strengthen what he hath wrought for us, *Psa. 68. 28.* and that he would establish the work of our hands, *Psa. 90. 17.* Then may we cease from praying, when we shall stand in need of nothing, and shall be no more exposed to wants, trials, dam gers, troubles and temptations; and then our prayers shall be changed into un-interrupted praises. So much for the two first branches of the first question, viz. when and how oft we should pray? now we proceed to the third and last, viz. how much time should be spent in pray-

(n) Sine in-
termissione
orate, h. e.
quando est ali-
qua gratia,
aut mali libe-
ratio, quod
premit, prae-
sens, aut immi-
net, & metu
cruciat, impe-
randa, non (a-
tis est semel
aut bis orare,
sed instantes
& perseveran-
ter, donec ob-
tineat; ut do-
cet exemplum
viduam,
Luk. 18 &
ecclesia oran-

in pro Petro, *Act. 12.* orandum ergo tam diu pro dono obtinendo, donec illud impetremus, ut ubi impetratum est, ne illud omittamus, pro ejus conservatione est Deus iterum a nobis rogandus, &c. *Salmer. loc. cit.*

er, and how long we should continue in that exercise before we leave off? *Ans.* Since the holy Spirit doth not here limite the Saints, who are we, that we should take upon us to prescribe, or to bind them to any rule: but let every one according to his stock and measure of grace, according to his present disposition and frame of spirit, according to his calling and present exigence and condition, &c. stay longer, or for a shorter while at the throne of Grace: As there is a great variety in reference to these considerable circumstances, So the Lord doth allow to us a proportionable latitude, as to the time that should be employed in prayer: but lest any should abuse this tender condescension, let us only in the general offer these few cautions.

1. When we meet with new pressures and difficulties, great tryals, or strong temptations; as we should add to the number, So to the length of our prayers, as we should pray more frequently, So we should continue *longer at the work*; especially when we add fasting to prayer, and set some time apart to deprecate some special evil, or to supplicate for some great mercy, either to our selves or the Church. But,

2. Though thou didst meet with no new trial, nor extraordinary pressure, though thy outward state and condition be the same, yet if thy strength and furniture be better, if thou meet with more then ordinary assistance, let thy work be answerable. O I do not weary so long as the (o) wind bloweth on thy garden, and maketh the spices send forth a pleasant smell; while the beloved (p) stayeth thee with sighs, and his fruit is sweet to thy taste, so long as he holdeth his left hand under thy head, and embraceth thee with his right hand, making thee sit down under his shadow with great delight, do not withdraw from his presence: O I do not go from the banquetting house, while thy hunger continueth, and the Master of the feast welcometh thee, and spreadeth his banner of love over thee, but while the honeycomb droppeth, (q) eat, O friends, eat abundantly, O beloved; while the heavenly gale lasteth, do not take in thy sails; thou art not yet near the harbour, and if ye let the present opportunity pass, it may cost thee much pains, and sweat

(o) Cant.
4. 16.

(p) Cant. 2.
3, 4, 5, 6.

(q) Cant. 5. 1.

in plying the oars, before thou shalt make up that loss. And thus the judicious *Austin* having spoken of the short and frequent prayers of some holy men in *Egypt*, did even from thence infer this conclusion; for, therefore, saith he, did they not stay long away from the throne, least deadness should creep on; and would they then leave the work so long as they met with enlargement? Hence, he (r) concludeth, that though much speaking, vain babbling, and idle repetitions be loathsome to the holy Lord, *Mat. 6. 7.* yet much prayer is very acceptable to him, if it be accompanied with fervency and enlargement of heart: and it is considerable, that the popish Doctors (these patrons of formal and lip-devotion) do approve this caveat, affirming, that long prayers are only then prevalent and acceptable, when (according to *Austins* limitation) they are fervent, zealous and importunate; So (s) *Aquinas* with his disciples, and *Rainerens*; yea, and *Bellarmino* himself, that great deceiver of this age by his patronage of the mock-prayers of the Roman Church. Ah! should we in this come short of these lax-casuists? and shall we, while the cloud of presence abideth upon our tabernacle, go out from the presence of the Lord.

But here we may take occasion from *Austins* words, to enquire, whether it be lawfull to use repetitions in prayer? *Ans.* Certainly some repetitions are lawfull, and warranted by the example of Christ and of the Saints, both in the old and new Testament, and may be very pithy and emphatick expressions of zeal, love, spiritual delight, importunity, faith, &c. or of the greatness of our danger and strait, &c. But yet there are other repetitions, which are unlawfull and forbidden, *Mat. 6. 7.* viz. 1. idle and vain repetitions, proceeding from want of, 1. affection; 2. matter; and, 3.

(2) expression or words: 2. affected and hypocritical repe-

unde quam diu in orante devotio durat, tam diu oratio durare debet, &c. vid. loc. *Bellarmino*. de bon. oper. in part. lib. 1. cap. 9.

(3) Viz. When want of words, floweth from want of zeal and affection,

(r) *Ac per hoc etiam ipsi sancti ostendunt, hanc intentionem sicut non est obtinendam si perdurare non possit, ita si perduraverit, non cito esserumpendam: absque enim ab oratione multa loquutio, sed non desit multa precatio, si servens perseverat intentione, Aug. loci cit. scilicet epist. 111. cap. 10.*

(s) *Thom. 2. 2. quasi. 83. art. 14. ad 11. Rainer. panth. scilicet de orat. cap. 7. ubi concludit sic,*

titions, when either that we may seem devout, or that we may play the orator, we may ingeminate the same words, in a strain of eloquence and elegance: 3. proud and boasting repetitions, when we think to be heard for our much speaking, and that our vain words doth oblige the Lord, and deserve an answer.

But, 3. in case of dulness and indisposition of heart, yea, and of bodily fainting and weakness, it were better to be frequent in prayer, then to continue long in that exercise, and to divert a while, and by reading, meditation, or conference to sharpen the irons, rather then to use them while they are so blunt; nay, thou mayest well intermix the works of thy lawfull calling, and follow thy business in the world, or moderately use some recreation for repairing some natural vigour and activity, which may be subservient in this heavenly exercise: We do not serve a hard Master, who will call for alike work from the weak and strong, and who will allow us no time for our own work, or for sitting and preparing us for his service.

You will say, but were it not better alwaies to be short in prayer, whatever be our fitness and disposition, since these prayers which are recorded in the Scriptures, are of no considerable length, the longest being that of *Solomon* at the dedication of the Temple, *1 King. 8.* and of our blessed Lord a little before his Passion, *Joh. 17.* the complaint of the afflicted, *Psa. 102.* *Ezra* his confession, *chap. 9.* the Levites thanksgiving and acknowledging of the Lords justice in punishing that people for their sins, *Nehem. 9. &c.* We have also the practice of these Saints in *Egypt*, whom *(u)* *Auspin* mentioneth, and doth not condemn; some also of the present age, eminent for piety, might here be alledged, particularly the judicious, Mr. *(x)* *Gürnal. Ans.* Albeit, 1. we must not quench the Spirit, nor draw back so long as the Lord doth arrest us at the throne, by the smiles of his countenance; yet, 2. for ordinary, I do not dissent from those, who do advise rather to be frequent in prayer, then to continue long at once; our hearts are very slippery, and our affections cannot long keep their vigour and zeal, but like a deceitfull bow, will

(u) *Loc. jam. sit.*

(x) *Ubi supra pag. 477.*

will quickly flaken, and not be able to carry the arrow to the mark. But especially in publick, and when we joyn with others, we would so far condescend to their weakness, as not to stretch forth our selves to such a length, as the most enlarged can scarcely reach, as is too usual, and I wish, that no principle of Pharisaism and self-seeking had influence therein; but, 3. though thus for ordinary, we need not be very long, yet when we are under indisposition, we may yet be shorter, but then we would be more frequent; yea, 4. as to *occasional* prayer, we may yet spend less time in it, and yet prevail; and we would here observe a very considerable difference, for albeit we need not stay long in our ordinary course of daily prayer, yet comparatively some considerable space of time would be allowed for that exercise. but as to *occasional* prayer, we may be very short in it; yea, when we are pressed with business, or company, and have not opportunity to go apart, and in a solemn manner to make our address to God, we may dart up to heaven some short *ejaculation*, which will not be thrust out, nor sent away without the blessing.

And having thus made mention of ejaculatory prayer, we could not leave that sweet point, till we had digressed a little to its use, necessity and singular use, were it not that Mr. (7) *Cobbet*, and Mr. *Gurnal* have spoken so fully and pithily to that subject; and now, I shall need add no more, but recommend what they have written, to all those who desire to walk with God, and to carry on a safe and thriving trade with heaven: But, who is able to discover the excellency, and several advantages of such short ejaculations and apostrophe's to God? O! how do they help to maintain a heavenly and praying-disposition in the heart? These are the swift messengers, which upon all occasions we may dispatch to the throne; by these, we may keep constant correspondence with heaven, and have our conversation there; no calling, trade, nor condition of life needs hinder this spiritual traffique and negotiation; the most laborious tradesman may follow his business constantly, and work hard in his shop, and thus pour out a prayer to God; such a short

(y) Mr.
Cobbet of
pray. part. 12
cha. 2. Mr.
Gurnal ubi
supra cha. 30.
pag. (275.
which should
be) 383.

parenthesis, will make no sensible and considerable interruption in any business or employment. And oh! what a difference is there between those Christians, who exercise themselves in such spiritual diversions, and short conversations to God, and others who suffer their heart to stay so long here beneath, and so to fasten and take such deep root in the earth. The Lord in his providence offereth to us many occasions for some spiritual thoughts and heavenly meditation; where canst thou cast thine eyes, and not behold a miracle, which thou dost sleight, because it is ordinary, and from day to day renewed, or continued? who hath covered the face of the earth with such variety of herbs, flowers, &c. who maketh the fire to burn, the wind to blow, &c. And besides these outward occasions, how many motions doth the Spirit suggest for lifting up the heart to God? and were it not our wisdom, not to choak these motions, nor let such opportunities slip, but to dart up some short desire and ejaculation, till thy business permit thee to go to the throne in a more solemn and continued way? But let not such ejaculations be pretended as a cloak for laying aside a constant course of continued prayer; that were to make things act contrary to their nature, and to make the means which are subordinat, and should be subservient unto the end, to exclude the end; for this is one, and a main fruit of such ejaculations, to fit and prepare the heart to continue instant in prayer, when of purpose we perform that solemn duty.

But least any should abuse these Scripture-instances, making these a cloak for their negligence, and want of love to the work; saying, what should we be more holy, and continue longer in prayer than those eminent Saints whose supplications are recorded in the Word? Let such consider, 1. that as of sermons, So of prayers for the most part we have but some brief notes; all was not written that was at such an occasion spoken by the Saints, though all was spoken that is written of them; and yet as to the present case there is so much written, as may rather make us tremble, then thus boast and presume, as if it were no great matter to come that length,

length; for, though the words be not set down, yet the time is sometimes specified, and such a proportion of it, as few will make their measure, thus our blessed Lord continued all night in prayer, Luk. 6. 12. Nehemiah spent certain daies in fasting and prayer, Neh. 1. 4. and a fourth part of a day is spent in prayer and confession, Neh. 9. 3. The Jews fasted (and to what purpose did they fast, if prayer was not joyned therewith?) neither eating nor drinking three daies, Esch. 4. 16, 17. And David professeth, that he had cried himself hoarse, and that his throat was dried, Psa. 69. 3. that all night he made his bed to swim, and watered his couch with tears, Psa. 6. 6. And will any dare yet to boast, that they have come the length required, or recorded in Scripture? But, 2. such would remember, that the prayers that are set down in the Scriptures, were poured out upon some special occasion, and were framed only, or mainly in reference to the present particular; but we in our daily, and constant course of prayer, must look to all our wants and necessities; and must petition not some one mercy, but what we stand in need of (z) for life and godliness, personal (z) 1 Pet. 1. 3. mercies, and publick mercies, mercies for our selves, and for all the Saints; and we should particularly confess our sins, with their severall aggravations, and beg pardon for all our provocations, and grace and strength for every duty; and praise God for all his mercies: And can all this be to purpose performed in so short a space of time as those vaintalkers, and mockers of the holy Scriptures would allow? But yet (as we said in the entry) we will prescribe no time; only we would not have any upon a mistake to limit themselves to a shorter time, then the nature of this exercise, and their own need doth require.

But here we may behold our duty, and great priviledge to pray alwaies; as we are obliged, So it would be our happiness to improve every season and opportunity of prayer: Christ purchased to us, not with his money, but with his blood this liberty to draw nigh to the King as oft as we will and as our need requireth; I have read of one, who offered to his King a great sum of money but to have leave once or
twice

(a) Mark. 6.
13.

twice a day to come and say, *God save your Majesty*. But you may not come once or twice, but as oft as you please to the King of kings, you will alwaies get access, and will never be sent away empty, and without the blessing; if you come to blest and praise his great Name, you shall be blessed of him; if you come to ask, you shall receive, nor only (a) *unto the half of a kingdom*, but a whole kingdom, and an incorruptible crown of glory that fadeth not away: Ah! who would not come to his doors, who hath such an almes to give? But ah! the folly and desperate negligence of secure sinners, who will not enter in at such an open door, who will not knock nor cry, though their need press them never so much, and who will not seek though they have a promise to find; O! what diligence and frequency is necessary here? An earthly King will get great attendance, and yet what hath he to give to his followers and supplicants? *Solomons* servants waited upon, and stood before him continually, 1 Kings, 10. 8. and yet we soon weary in standing before the King of kings; the importunate widow, *Luk.* 18. did not faint, but from time to time renewed her complaint, till she was answered, and yet though our business be great, though our life and happiness, and matters of soul concernment be lying at the stake, we are secure and negligent; as we are foolish and injurious to our own souls, So we are unfaithful to our Master and Lord, and a scandal and reproach to our holy profession; though no master can so reward his servants, yet what master is so ill served? The Idols of the nations were more diligently and frequently worshiped, no cost was spared in their service; how sumptuous were their sacrifices? Nay, they did not (b) spare their children, yea, nor their own lives in their sacrifices; and yet though our Christian sacrifice be so easie and reasonable, how slow are we to offer it? Mahumetans and Papiests will rise up in judgment against us; *Mahomet* and canonized men and women, are more carefully and frequently worshiped then the true and living God; and the ordinances of that great Impostor and of Antichrist, are better observed then the commands of the Lord of heaven and earth: (c) *Mahomet*

(b) Jer. 7. 31
and 2. 35.
vid. Alex. ab
Alex. gen.
dier. lib. 6.
esp. ult. 6.
Polyd. Ver.
gil. de in-
vent. ver.
lib. 5. cap. 8.
(c) Alex.
Rossi *travels*
sect. 6. pag.
171.

appointed

appointed his followers to pray five times a day, and they do so: the Papists have their seven canonical hours of prayer, and these must be observed; no business nor employment will hinder or divert them, and this is the (d) least their canons will allow; and yet, though our Lord and Saviour command us to pray alwaies, and without ceasing, many will not pray at all, and not a few but for the fashion: And who are they that continue instant in prayer at all seasons and occasions? and how shall we then be able to stand in judgment? Ah! what can we answer for this desperat negligence and contempt, when we must give an account of our stewardship?

But as for such as prize their priviledge, and make conscience of their duty, they would take heed least frequency and custom make them not formal and customary, and that they do not undervalue and slight this heavenly exercise, because they are oft employed in it, *it is not a vain thing, it is* (as (e) Moses said of the commands) *your life*. Thy wants, tryals and difficulties, do every day recur; thou hast as much need of help, of grace, and of mercy to day, as at the first, and why shouldst thou slack thy hand? especially since a dead, lazy, formal prayer, is no (f) better then no prayer, and is a provocation and abomination, rather then an acceptable sacrifice. Prayer is thy work, trade and great employment, O Pilgrim of Zion; and wilt thou slight thy calling because thou must daily be employed in it? But ah! *the* (g) *children of this world are wiser in their generation, then the children of lights*; O I if we would learn of the world our duty; will any man slight, and become superficial in the works of his calling, because he is continually exercised therein? but on the contrary, will rather labour to mend his work, and to (h) learn by doing to do better: What? is the market come down? are thy hopes less, or thy encour-

(d) *Certum est bonas canonicas non esse pauciores quam septem.* uar. loc. cit. lib. 4. cap. 6. unde Rainius cum glossa interpretatur hæc verba, Psal. 119. 164. *septies quotidie laudote fis* (inquit) *in die i. e. septem vicibus, seu septem horis canonicis incumbis religiosi laudare Deum Rainius in*

roc. orat. cap. 7. (e) Deut. 32. 47. (f) See Part. 2. Ch. 2. Sect. 1. Condit. 5. (g) Luk. 16. 8. (h) *Fabricando fabricamus.*

(i) *Il. 62.7.*(k) *lsa. 62.6.*

ragments fewer? why then art thou become more remiss
and negligent? doth the King chide with thee for coming so
oft, and (i) *giving him no rest*? or doth he upbraid thee
with former favours? nay doth he not rather challenge thee
for thy unkindness, and invite thee to come more frequent-
ly, yea, and alwaies, *never (k) keeping silence, nor holding
thy peace day or night*? the oftter thou comest, the welco-
mer thou wilt be; and the more thou hast received, the more
will yet be given unto thee, *Mat. 25. 29. Mark. 4. 25.*

PART. IV.

PART. IV.

Of the return of prayer.

IN the fourth and last part of this Treatise, we will speak, 1. of the certainty of the return of prayer, and the different waies the Lord observeth in answering his honest supplicants; 2. of the Lords hiding himself from the prayers of the wicked; yea and of his own people when they return to folly; and, 3. the way of conclusion, we will hold out several motives to stir us up to the serious and frequent performance of this solemn exercise, with an answer to objections.

CHAP. I.

Of the success of prayer, What the Lords hearing of prayer doth import, how it may be known, and Why the Lord doth not alwaies answer the prayers of his servants after one and the same manner?

THERE be here several particulars, to which we shall speak in order; 1. that the Lord will alwaies hear those prayers that can lay claim to a promise; 2. for removing the great stumbling block of prayer-less souls, we shall endeavour to shew, 1. what an answer to prayer doth import; 2. what are the different waies the Lord observeth in answering our prayers; 3. that the Lord alwaies heareth the regular prayers of his servants, but at no time the prayers of the wicked; 4. we will propound some marks and evidences for discerning the success of prayer; 5. we will modestly

The Lord will certainly answer, &c.

deftly enquire after thefe holy ends and defigns, why the Lord will not alwaies give the particular mercy that was defired, even when he accepteth and answereth their prayer.

SECT. I.

The Lord will certainly answer all thofe prayers that are grounded upon the promifes.

1 Joh. 5. 14, 15. *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; and if, &c.*

Iſa. 45. 19. *I ſaid not unto the ſeed of Jacob, ſeek ye me in vain.*

A wight man (we uſe to ſay) never wanteth a weapon; this is the Chriſtians motto, none can rob him of his arms; enemies may aſſault, and fight againſt us, yea, they may prevail, and tread upon us; they may ſpoil us and diſarm us, and take away from us all ſuch weapons as they uſe againſt us; but yet when devils and men have done their worſt, the Chriſtian ſtands alwaies girt with his armour of proof; it is out of the enemies reach; our magazine is in a high and impregnable rock, which cannot be ſtormed; *it*

(a) Eph. 6.
11, 13.

(b) Eph. 6.
18. *And it is there laſt placed, not as if it were the leaſt part of it, but becauſe it importeth, and maketh uſe of all the former.*

(a) *the armour of God*, and he who made it, doth ſtill keep and preſerve it; though he gave it to us for our uſe, yet he is ſtill the owner, and keeper both of it, and of thoſe in whoſe hands he puts it, Eph. 6. 11, 13, 14, 16. The Chriſtian (if he prove not falſe to his Maſter, and faint-hearted without cauſe) can never be brought ſo low, as to render his ſword; no enemy can force him to yield; and therefore he only is the truly worthy and invincible man; he will not and cannot upon any terms ſubmit, or be overcome; he diſdaineth to capitulate with an enemy; whatſoever conditions of peace are diſhonourable to him, he muſt prevail and carry the day, Eph. 6. 16. Rom. 8. 37. Jam. 4. 7. Now prayer is a main (b) parcel of this armour, which ſuppoſeth and

and girdeth all the rest fast to us, and therefore frequently carrieth the name of the whole, *preces & lachryma sunt arma Ecclesie*, prayers and tears (according to the old saying) are the arms of the Church; as none are able, So neither will any labour to rob them of their arms, though some mocking, others insulting, will upbraid them with them; but let such mock on, yet wo to them, if they use these arms against them, their malice, plots and machinations; if David pray, that the counsel of *Achishophel* may be turned into foolishness, it will not stand, and being rejected, it will prove an occasion of his ruine, 2 Sam. 15. 31. and 17. 23. whether persecutors fall, or prevail, they are hastening their own ruine; and though the prayers of the Saints be not directed against their persons, nor for their eternal destruction, yet, the Lord in justice, doth thus punish incorrigible enemies at length; and in the mean time the Lord is treasuring up wrath against them, and many a time poureth out some visible judgment upon them here; and if there be any way or mean for reclaiming of them, the prayers of the persecuted will prevail; so that the Saints prayers never return empty; this sword is never drawn, nor this bow bent in vain; and therefore may fely be compared to the bow of *Jonathan*, and the sword of *Saul*, which are said *never to return empty*, 2 Sam. 1. 22. Honest supplicants are like these left-handed Benjamins, which could aim at an hair-breadth and not miss, *Judg. 20. 16*. And this is the excellency of this notable piece of armour, that it is not only a weapon for defence, but a talent also wherewith we may trade for time and eternity; its usefull in times of peace, as well as war; and therefore it shall continue and abide, even then when (according to that sweet promise concerning the dayes of the Gospel, *Isa. 24.*) *men shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and shall learn war no more*: What is said of godliness in the general, 1 Tim. 4. 8. may well be applied to prayer in particular, *it is profitable unto all things*, and in all times, in every trade and condition of life, in every business and occurrence it may be improved to advantage; the praying soul

as he only, so alwayes, is happy and successfull; he cannot miscarry nor be disappointed, (when his faith and expectation is regulated by the promise, the least jot whereof shall not be un-fulfilled to him) the Lord will hear him when he crieth, and satisfie his desire, *Psa.* 145. 18, 19. *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his Will, he heareth us; — and we know that we have the petitions we desired of him: if we ask, it shall be given; if we seek, we shall find; if we knock, it shall be opened, and we shall receive liberally, not some few things, but all things whatsoever we shall ask in Christs Name,* 1 *Joh.* 5. 14, 15. *Mat.* 7. 7. *Mat.* 21. 22. *Mark* 11. 24. *Luk.* 11. 9, 10. *Jam.* 1. 5. *Ioh.* 14. 13, 14. *Ioh.* 16. 23, 24. &c.

We will not now stay to enumerat the several promises made to prayer, these being so many and obvious; nor to vindicat the Lords fidelity from atheistical cavils; or to hold forth some grounds for supporting our faith, in waiting upon the Lord for the accomplishment of his promises, having at so great a length insisted on these particulars, *Part* 2. *Ch.* 2. *Sect.* 2. Let us now only view some few Scriptures, and ponder how pithily the Spirit of God there expresseth the efficacy, power and prevalency of prayer; *Let me alone* (saith the Lord to praying *Moses*) *Exod.* 32. 10. *Domine, qui tenet te?* who holdeth thee, O Lord? saith *Austin*: an honest supplicant holds (as it were) my hands, and will not (saith the Lord) let me alone; though I would compound with him and buy his peace, yet he will not be put off, but I must yield to him, *v.* 10. 14. And then let us consider, what is recorded of praying *Jacob*, *Gen.* 32. 24, 25, 26. 28. *Hof.* 12. 3, 4. first, that he had power with God; yea, and, 2. that he had power (c) over God, and prevailed over the great (d) Angel of the Covenant; 3. that though he said *Let me go*, yet he would not let him go till he blessed him; and, 4. wherein his strength did lye, *viz.* in his tears and supplications: but, let none through their folly and ignorance strain and abuse these words, which do most significantly hold forth the power and success of prayer, but not any weakness and imperfection in our holy and mercifull God, *Who did* (as *Calvin* speaketh)

(c) *Vid.* Calvin: (*supra* citatum) in loc.
(d) See *Diodor.* on *Hof.* 32.

speakeath) *bold up Jacob with his right hand, and fight against him only with his left.* To these we shall add no more but a word or two from *I/a. 45.* where, *v. 11.* the Saints are invited to *to ask him of things concerning his sons*, which we may conceive to be spoken of spiritual mercies to every thirsting soul, or of publick mercies to the Church; *and concerning the works of my hands*, or things that fall under a common and general providence, *viz.* temporal and outward mercies, *(e) command ye me*, saith the Lord, *Who commands all the host of heaven and earth*, *v. 12.* If these words had dropt from the pen of a man, we might justly have abominated them as blasphemous; but the Lord himself having thus stoop'd so low to strengthen our faith, let us admire this wonderfull condescension and improve it to the right end, for supporting our confidence when we draw nigh to God: What? shall worm *Jacob* have power with God, and pot-sheards on earth strive and wrestle with their Maker? yea, and may they in the combate prevail and carry the day? Yea, saith the Lord, *this honour and priviledge have all the Saints*; all mourning *Jacobs* shall become prevailing and victorious *I/raels*. What? may the base beggar and wretched rebel come to court and have access to the King? Yea, saith the Lord, the beggar may come in his rags and lay out all his sores; and if the rebel hath submitted and gotten a pardon, he may present his supplication to me; and all my subjects and servants, of whatsoever rank or condition, may not only come and ask what they will, but they may *command me*: surely the Lord doth not complement with his poor creatures, when he saith, *they may command him*. There is here the reality of the thing, but in a way that is suitable to the glorious majesty of the great and infinite Lord, in that the Saints have more power and moyen with God, then the greatest Courtiers and Favourites of an earthly King have with him; and in that they shall as certainly prevail, as if they could command. O! when will we be sensible enough of this astonishing condescension and love, that the high and lofty one will regard us and take notice of our requests; and then stoop so low to express his tender bowels, and to encourage us while we draw nigh to him,

(e) *וְאֶמְרָא*
præcipietis
mibi, Pagnin.
subesse mibi
Mercer. in
rad. וְאֶמְרָא

Heb. 10.

Habak. 3.
18.(h) Isa. 34. 3.
4. Pla. 97. 5.(i) The word
of prophecy,
promise, threat-
ning, &c.

as in our own dialect to speak to us, and to hold out himself as one *with whom* and *over whom* we had power, yes, and shall I say (what he himself hath said) *whom we may command*? and shall we be so base and ingrate as to doubt any more? O I let us rebuke our ignorance and unbelief, and from henceforth, with confidence, and in (f) *full assurance of faith*, draw nigh to him; knowing, that *though the fig-trees do not blossom, nor fruit be in the vines, though the labour of the Olive fail, and the fields yield no meat, though the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls, yet all honest supplicants may rejoice in the God of their salvation*, who will not suffer the promise to fail nor disappoint those that wait upon him: the return of prayer is more certain and infallible then the seasons of the year; though these long ago were established by an un-alterable covenant, Gen. 8. 22. yet, the Lord hath reserved a liberty, not to follow alwayes there the same course, and by such variations of providence to punish (when it seemeth good to him) the delinquencies of men; but this word of promise, concerning the success of prayer, is so absolute and peremptory, that it admits of no exception; and the return of prayer being grounded upon such a sure foundation, *though (g) heaven and earth should pass away, though the mountains should melt as wax, and all the host of heaven be dissolved, and fall down as the leaf falleth off from the vine*, yet the Lord will own his (h) Word, and will fulfill all his Promises, the least jot or tittle whereof shall not, cannot fail, *Mat. 5. 18. Luke 16. 17.* And doth he not solemnly protest, that though he commandeth, inviteth and intreateth us to come unto him and pour out our desires before him, and proclaimeth his fury and indignation to all persons and families that call not upon his Name, yet he never said, *seek ye me in vain*? *Isa. 45. 19.* Who is the man that dare challenge the God of truth, and can say, that ever he sought him in vain, if in truth and with the whole heart?

Sect. II.

The great prejudice and stumbling block of prayerless souls: their mistake discovered; What the Lords hearing doth import; that the Lord doth not alwayes answer prayer after one and the same maner, and What are these different Wayes; that he never heareth the wicked, and wherefore notwithstanding he will satisfie their desire; and that he alwayes heareth his servants, when they call upon him in truth.

Prov. 15. 8. *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is his delight.*

Joh. 9. 31. *We know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth.*

THere is one great objection against the success of prayer, which proveth a neck-break to carnal hearts, and may sometimes be the (a) trial of, and a sad temptation to, the Saints: and it is this.

Obj. Do not all things come alike to all? is there not one event to the righteous and to the wicked? and did not the wisest of men observe and preach this truth? *Eccl.* 9. 2. Do not the wicked, who (b) cast off fear and restrain prayer, prosper as well as they that fear the Lord, and who in (c) all things make their requests known unto him? And therefore, those who are accounted Atheists, are unjustly taxed, for asking, *What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?* Job 21. 15. And the Prophet had no reason to complain of those men, who said, that *it was in vain to serve God, to keep his Ordinances, and walk mournfully before him?* Mal. 3. 14. Doth not experience (that is the best master) clearly show, that godliness is no gain, and that there is no good nor advantage that can be reaped by prayer, and that all the promises of audience, and all that can be said concerning the suc-

(a) Pla. 73^r

1. &c.

Jerem. 12. 1,

2.

Job 21. 7 &c.

Obj.

(b) Job 15.

4.

(c) Phil. 4. 6.

cess

cess and return of prayer, are but empty words, having no truth nor reality in them? Was not *Esau* honourable and rich, as well as *Jacob*? was not *Abab* a King as well as *Josiah*, and were they not alike in their deaths? Nay, did it not go well with the *Jewes*, so long as they served the *Queen of heaven*? but, so soon as they returned to worship the *God of heaven*, they were consumed by famine and the sword, *Ier.* 44. 17, 18. And therefore, they had reason to resolve and say to *Jeremiah*, what they said, *v.* 16. *As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee.* *Ans.* Though few be so impudent as to speak thus with their mouth; yet, alas! it is the heart-language of too many, else they durst not cast off fear and restrain prayer before *God*: But, that we may encounter with this *Goliath*, who thus desisteth and insulteth over the armies of *Israel*, saying in the name of all Atheists, (as he in the name of the *Philistines*, *1 Sam.* 17. 9, 10.) *If there be among you a man that is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will submit, and all of us become tributaries to the God of Israel, and pay him the revenue of daily prayer.* Let us, with little *David*, come forth against this Champion, in the name of the Lord of hosts, (whose Truth and Name is blasphemed, and whose Worship and Ordinances reproached) and in his strength we may confidently say, (with him, *v.* 46.) *This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand, and I will smite thee and take thine head from thee; for the battel is the Lords, and he will give thee into our hands:* and we may not only be encouraged (with *David*, *v.* 37.) from former experiences in other cases, as hard and difficult; but also from the experience of all Saints in the same case, while they have been called out to wrestle with this strong temptation. And, O that the Lord were pleased to furnish us with a word, that may be helpfull to those who shall hereafter meet with the same conflict; and that in his strength we may so encounter this *Hydra*, that after one head is cut off, two others do not arise and grow up in its place, but that it may be utterly overthrown and destroyed: the battel is the Lords, and his honest servants, after they have fought a while with his enemy,

have

have alwayes at length found his help, and by the following or such-like considerations, as so many weapons of proof, have prevailed and carried the day, and cut off the head of this mighty adversary and enemy of the faith and peace of Gods children.

For answer, we will speak to the two branches of the objection severally; and, 1. to that which concerneth the wicked, their success and prosperity, applying that point more particularly to those who live in the visible Church, (that being our case) who have some form of godliness, though they deny the power of it, and never knew what it was to call upon God in truth; and thus their prayers being no prayers in Gods account, and yet followed with success, their case may well come under the former objection: and in answer both (d) to the one and the other, we will, 1. show what Gods hearing of prayer doth import; 2. that the wicked, though they pray; yet receive nothing in answer to their prayers; and, 3. that whether they pray or not, they receive nothing in mercy and love, or for their good, but for other holy ends, which we shall briefly name; and thus all their blessings must be cursed, and their prosperity and success their ruine and snare.

As to the first, the Lords hearing of prayer doth import, 1. his approbation of the matter and object of our desires; for if we ask what he doth not approve, if we ask any sinfull and unlawfull thing, we cannot ask *according to his will*; and therefore must not think that he will hear, 1 *Iob. 5. 14.* 2. It importeth an admission, reception, and the acceptance of the prayer it self, it having those qualifications which the promise of audience doth suppose and require, *Iam. 5. 15. Iam. 1. 6, 7. &c.* See *Part 2. Ob. 2.* 3. The return and answer must be given in mercy, and out of special and paternal love, *Rom. 8. 15. 32. Iob. 16. 24. 26, 27.* 4. The desired mercy must be given in faithfulness, and as an accomplishment of the promises, upon which the supplicant did build his confidence, *Psa. 25. 10. Psa. 143. 1.* 5. It must be the fruit of Christs purchase, and therefore must be askt for his sake and in his name, *Iob. 14. 13, 14.* through

X x x

him

him only we can have access and acceptance, *Eph. 3. 18.* 6.^a Thou must pray in the holy Ghost, the Spirit must help thee to pour out that prayer that God will accept and hear, *Rom. 8. 27.* See *Part 1. Ch. 9.* 7. The mercy must be given as the reward, fruit, and (as it were) the purchase of thy prayer; not as if our prayers could merit and deserve the least mercy, or had any proper efficiency or causality in procuring the blessing, which is totally and solely the purchase of the blood of Christ; but because prayer is a mean appointed of God, (and thus, by virtue of his own ordinance and appointment, it hath power and doth prevail with him) for obtaining, not only a reward in the general, (as every duty and ordinance) but particularly for procuring the blessing, as to the particular desired and askt, whether by giving or withholding it; for thus, *prayer is self must avail*, and prevail with God, *1am. 1. 15, 16.*

Hence, in the general and at the first view, it may appear, how groundless and gross the common mistake here is; for, multitudes do think, when the Lord, in the course of providence, doth give what men did desire and ask, that then he heareth and answereth their prayers; and on the contrary, that when he doth not give the particular that was askt, that then he doth not hear and answer the prayer: and this gross and brutish mistake hath in great part occasioned, and is the main ground of this objection, and is the great stumbling-block whereon Atheists fall and ruine their souls. But, how false both these are, may easily appear, not only to those who have the Word for their information, but even by the light of nature, as might be made manifest from the Writings of heathens: but now we must speak to the first; and here we might resume the several requisites that do concur, and must be, where any mercy is received as a return of prayer; all those being wanting and deficient, as to the wicked their asking and receiving, except the first, and it also very oft, (for though outward things may be sought and desired, yet not in that maner and measure as they do, who make them their idol and place their felicity in them) and thus we have as many arguments to prove, that they receive nothing in mercy and in
answer

answer to their prayers, as we now did enumerat conditions and requisits in the acceptance and audience of prayer; for, 1. they ask amiss often, as to the matter, and alwayes, as to the maner and end; 2. their prayers have no gracious and spiritual qualification; 3. they have no interest in the covenant of Promise, neither are they objects of Gods love, &c. To which we shall only add a word or two; first, *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 15. 8. and will the Lord accept and remunerat what he thus loatheth and abominateth? and yet such have their desires satisfied, which they durst offer to God prayer-ways; (for the vilest of men may have some form of devotion) I have (e) read of theeves and robbers, who when they were going to steal and murder their innocent neighbours, have prayed to God for success, and who have prospered in such wicked wayes; and will any be so absurd and blasphemous, as to father upon the holy one of *Israel* such wicked courses, or to say that he did hear and accept such abominable desires and prayers? 2. The mercy given in return of prayer is a mercy indeed, and proveth a blessing; but what the wicked receive, proveth in the issue to be a curse and snare; as it is given in wrath, So it doth them little good: thus he gave the Israelites a King in his wrath, and they had little comfort in him, *Hos.* 13. 11. thus also he gave them flesh after they had lusted after it in the wilderness, but while it was in their mouth, his wrath came upon them, *Psa.* 78. 29, 30, 31. And thus the Lord, when he satisfieth the desire of carnal hearts, hath no respect either to the promise or to their prayers, but rather to the threatnings and the cry of their iniquities, since he giveth in wrath, and what he giveth proveth a judgment, curse and snare; their riches, honours and pleasures become sewel to feed their lusts, and thus through their abuse and ingratitude they add to their guiltiness, and therefore to their eternal misery, and these become as coals heaped on their head. What the wise man saith of riches, may be applied to all their enjoyments, *they are kept for the owners burns*, Eccl. 5. 13. *All their consolations* (as (f) one speaketh) *are desolations*: yea, to the Saints themselves they have often been strong

(e) *Agud*
Camden, *huc*
cit. part. i.
cap. 7. pag.
162.

(f) *Omnes humana consolationes sine gratia & benedictione divina sunt desolationes.*

(g) *Secundum
eritum illud
Augustini
religio pepe-
rit divitiis, &
glia devora-
vit matrem.
luxurians ani-
mi-ribus ple-
rumque/secun-
dis; nec faci-
le est aqua
conmoda men-
se pati, Ovid
de arte am.
lib. 2.*

(h) *Nay,
sometimes the
Lord speaketh
thus to his own
people, as
Ez. k. 36. 22,
35.*

(i) *Orationem
peccatoris ex
bono natura,
desiderio pro-
cedentem, De-
us audit...ex
pura miseri-
cordia.*

*Thom. 12.
quest 83.
art. 16. in
corp.*

(k) *Finis ope-
ris licet non
operantis,*

(g) temptations, as *David's* case, *Solomon's* peace, &c. And there is nothing that can sanctifie them, and prevent this snare, but the prayer of faith, 1 *Tim.* 3. 4, 5. *James* 5. 16. And thus we may hear the Lord speaking to carnal hearts when he satisfieth their desires; what we use to say to our unkind neighbours and relations, when we grant their request [It is (h) not (will we say) for your sake, nor for your request; but for this or that other reason, that we will do it] And thus, though their prayers may prove successfull, and they get what they desired, yet their prayers are not answered, neither do they receive in return to their prayers, but for such and such other holy ends, to which they are strangers and little mind.

You will say, what be these high and holy ends, which the Lord doth aim at in such a dispensation? *Ans.* These are not the same to all persons, nor at all occasions to one and the same person; but we will readily find some one, or more of the following ends to have place in every bountifull dispensation to the wicked, whether they have a form of godliness, and pour out some carnal prayers, or not: As, 1. the Lord will follow them with the blessings of a common providence in (i) testimony of his general bounty, kindness, and propension to shew mercy, and do good to all his creatures; thus, *he maketh his Sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust*, Mat. 5. 45. Thus, *he is kind to the evil and unthankfull*; and thus *he satisfieth the desire of every living thing*, Luk. 6. 35. *Psa.* 145. 16.

And as, 1. thus to be an evidence of his bounty, So also, 2. that he may manifest his long-suffering and patience towards the vessels of wrath, he will withhold deserved judgments, and follow them with outward mercies, *Rom.* 9. 22. And thus he will show that he is (what he is called, *Rom.* 15. 5.) *the God of patience*, not only by working it in his Saints, but by exercising it towards all men.

3. To allure them, and lead them in to repentance, *Rom.* 2. 4. This is the end of the (k) work and dispensation, which though wicked men may abuse to their own ruine, yet the Lords

Lords counsel must stand ; they cannot frustrate his holy designs , however they pervert his work.

4. The Lord will do good to the wicked , and satisfy their desires , when they offer them up prayer-waies to him , to evidence his approbation of , and delight in the prayers of his servants ; he will so far welcome and regard the very picture of prayer , as to give some benefits of a common providence , to show the power and prevalency of a regular and a well qualified prayer , and to encourage his people to the frequent and incessant practice thereof ; to raise up their hearts to an higher esteem of prayer , and to strengthen their faith and confident expectation of a return to their prayers ; thus in testimony of our tender respect to a dear friend , we will welcome and show kindness to any , who is like , and doth resemble such a person ; and thus the Lord taketh notice of *Ababs* fasting and prayers , 1 *King*. 21. 39.

But you will say , doth not the Lord say , because *Abab* had done so , therefore he would , &c ? *Ans.* Yet *Ababs* humiliation was not a proper mean (as not being right qualified , nor such as the Lord required) yet it gets the name , and the reward not for it self , but as being a sign and shadow of that which should have been ; and thus the Lord did hearken to *Abab* , not for his own sake , nor for his prayers sake , but to evidence his high esteem of that duty , when performed aright.

5. The Lord will thus satisfy the desires of the wicked for the trial of his honest servants ; their faith and patience must be brought to the touch-stone , and be (as many other waies , So also) assaulted by this temptation , and that often proveth a very strong one , *Psa.* 73. where we will find the servant of God sore put to it , and much shaken , *His feet were almost gone ; his steps had well-nigh slipped , when he considered how the wicked had all , and more then their heart could wish , while he was plagued , and chastened every morning ;* thus also , *Psa.* 37. *Psa.* 17. from ver. 9. *Jer.* 12. 1. 2. *Habak.* 1. from ver. 13. &c. But this doth add very much to the trial , when the wicked prosper in their oppression of the Saints , when the Lord seemeth to reject his people and

and their prayers, and in his providence to smile upon their enemies; and this was the case of the Saints, and the occasion of their sad complaints in some of these Scriptures now cited, as *Hab. 1. Jer. 12. &c.*

But, 6. this may not only be for trial, but also for correction, and a paternal chastigation of the people of God for their sins; *when the Lord is wroth with them, he sets up the right hand of their adversaries, and makes their enemies to rejoyce, Psa. 89. 38, 42. &c.*

7. The Lord will thus deal with the wicked in judgment and in wrath.

You will say, how can it be possible that these good things can be given in wrath? they seem rather to be pledges of love. *Ans.* These things in themselves are mercies, and should lead us in to repentance, and make us fear and love the Giver, but yet those venomous vipers suck poyson out of these sweet flowers; and thus in the issue these blessings (according to that sad word, *Mal. 2. 2.*) prove cursed and hurtfull; *When the Lord purposeth to show his wrath, he endureth with much long-suffering, and entertaineth with many favours, the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, Rom. 9. 22.* Mercies abused degenerat into curses, and prove dangerous snares and occasions of sin and misery; hence, kindness thus shown to the wicked, is called by an ancient, *miser cordia omni indignatione crudelior*, mercy more terrible then any rod and judgment: And another comparing the affliction of the Saints, with the prosperity of the wicked, calleth the one *miser cordia puniens*, mercy punishing, and the other *crudelitas parcens*, fury and indignation sparing: Wo (1) to him who gets his will, to his ruin; the Lord many a time in (m) mercy with-holds from his children, what he giveth in wrath to enemies; *the prosperity of fools shall destroy them, Prov. 1. 32.* and not only their abundance, and having more then their heart could wish, but their necessary accommodations, their food and raiment, *their table, and that which should have been for their welfare, becometh a snare, a trap and stumbling block unto them, Psa. 69. 22.* The success and prosperity of the wicked becometh

(fi) Male ergo
natus es quod
vult accipere,
Deo potius
miserantia non
accipis; pro
inde si hoc ab
illo petitur
unde homo
ladatur exau-
ditus, magis
metuendum
est ne quod
posset non dare
propitius, det
iratus. Aug.
just. in Joan.
traff. 71.

(m) Aliquan-
do Deus iratus
dat, quod pe-
tis; & Deus
propitius ne-
gat quod petis.
Aug. de verb.
dom. serm. 53.

cometh an occasion, both of sin and misery; first of sin; and here we (n) might instance several particulars, as it proveth an occasion of pride; if the Lord grant the desires of the wicked, they will exalt themselves, *Psa.* 140 8. Secondly, of impenitence, security and self-pleasing: when *Ephraim* became rich, and found out substance in all his waies, he said *no iniquity should be found in him*, *Hos.* 12 8. when the ground of the rich man brought forth plentifully, he said to his soul, *take thee ease, eat, drink and be merry*, *Luk.* 12 16, 19. Because the degenerat Israelits saw no evil, and had plenty when they sacrificed to the queen of heaven, they would not hearken to the words of the Prophet, *Ier.* 44 16, 17. Thirdly, of cruelty, though the tender mercies of the wicked are usually cruel, *Prov.* 12 10. yet especially when they are lifted up with success, then they become intolerable; not only their hand, but their tongue is cruel, and full of venom, *Heb.* 11 36 (o) 37.

And as thus the prosperity of the wicked becometh an occasion of sin, So also of misery and suffering; their victorious sword will at length enter into their own belly, *Psa.* 37 15. they will ere long be enclosed in their own fat, *Psa.* 17 10. their prosperity shall destroy them, *Prov.* 1 32. *Ier.* 12 1, 2, 3. their success is not only a fore-runner, but also a preparation and occasion of their ruin; *tolluntur in altum, ut lapsu graviore ruant*: they are lifted up, that their fall might be the greater; and their place in the world becometh a (p) rock, from which they are casten down head-long.

We need (q) not then fret our selves because of evil doers, nor envy their prosperity, *Psa.* 37 1. neither need we question the Lords fidelity, either in performing his promises to his children, or his threatnings against the wicked; nor have we

(1) *Sed qua reverentia legum quis metus aut pudor est unquam properantis avari? Ad scelus atque nefas quodsumque est purpuratus ducit, Juven. Sat. 14.*
(m) *These words may especially relate to the prosperous doyes of Antiochus Epiphanes, who yet in his sickness, and when the hand of God was upon him professed much tenderness to the people of God, a Maccab. 9.*
(n) *Quinimodo optabat honores, Et nimias colebat opes numero para-bat, Excelsa turris sa-*

bulata, unde altior esset Casus, & impulsæ præceps immane ruina Quid Crissus, quid Pompeius currit? & illum Ad sua qui domitos deduxit flagra Quiritis? Summus nempe locus, nulla non arte petitus; Magnæque numinibus vota exaudita malignis, Juven. satyr. 10. (o) Non est cur fideles desistant a legibus divinitus impositis, vel invidiant incredulis, quasi magnum lucrum fecerint, ubi adepsi sunt quod volebant, Calvin. instit. lib. 3. cap. 20.

The great prejudice and stumbling block, &c.

any reason to ask, with those wretches, *Mol. 2. 17. Where is the God of judgment?* not to say, with them, *Zeph. 1. 12. the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil;* but whatsoever cross-dispensations the godly are exercised with, and whatever success the wicked get in their evil waies, yet we may be perswaded, that *the froward is an abomination to the Lord; and that his secret* (his blessing, though thou discern it not) *is with the righteous, that the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked* (though full of riches) *and his blessing on the habitation of the just*, though never so mean and poor, *Prov. 3. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.*

And now we proceed to that other branch of the objection, that concerneth the Saints, their disappointments and want of success; as if the Lord did not hear nor regard their prayers. For answer, as we would remember what the Lords hearing of prayer doth import, So we would know how, and what be the different waies after which the Lord answereth the prayers of his people; least through our ignorance, unbelief, or want of observance, the Lord hear and answer our prayers, and yet we not know, nor take notice of his hand, as it was with *Iob, ch. 9. 16, 17.* and the reason he giveth there of his mistake, may also blind our eyes; for, we often, like foolish children, regard not what we have, and take little notice of what we receive, because we get not what we would have, and what our carnal desires crave; and thus, when the Lord delayeth for a while, though he draw nigh to us in the fit time and right season; yet (as that eminent Saint professeth of himself, *ver. 11.*) *though he goeth by, we see him not; and when he passeth on, we perceive him not;* our eyes are shut, that we cannot see his hand; and our ears are heavy, that we cannot hear what he saith in answer to our prayers; especially when the heavenly *echo* doth not answer our voice, and when he giveth not the particular mercy which was askt, but some other thing (though better for us) by way of compensation and gracious commutation. It would then be diligently observed, that the Lord may hear our prayers four different waies; 1. by way of *performance*, and giving the very particular we desired, and in our

time

time and manner; 1. by way of *compensation*, when he giveth not the very particular, but maketh a commutation in that which is better for us; 3. by *delaying* to give till the fit time for us to receive; and, 4. by *denying* what we ask: For, though then he make a compensation, yet it is no small mercy that he with-holdeth what would hurt us; and of it self is a gracious return of our prayers, and should with thanks-giving be acknowledged, though no new, and other mercy were then added.

You will say, when the Lord performeth, and satisfieth our desire by giving what we ask, yea, and when he maketh a compensation and exchange, giving us some other mercy in lieu of it, especially when he giveth what is better, as spirituals in stead of temporals (as usually he doth) in those cases it will not be denied, that the Lord heareth our prayers; but, 1. while he delayeth, and during the *interim* of the delay; 2. when he denieth what was askt, and will never give it, we cannot conceive how in those cases the Lord can be said to hear and answer our prayers; especially since the Lords denying to give what we prayed for, appeareth to be nothing else but his rejecting our prayers, and denying to answer them. *Ans.* Its too usual here to confound things much different, and to commit a most gross and dangerous fallacy, as if it were one and the same thing to receive what we ask, and to receive an answer to our prayers; and not to receive what we desire and ask, and to have our prayers rejected: But as we have shown, that the wicked may get their hearts desire and more in wrath, though their prayer be an abomination to the Lord; So now it shall appear, that the Lord doth accept and answer the prayers of his servants, though he give not what they askt; yea, and that the very delay for a season, and an absolute denial, may be a return and answer to their prayers.

You will say, that is strange doctrine. *Ans.* But most certain, and which should not be questioned among believers; for clearing of which; 1. let me ask how thou didst pray for such a supposed mercy? whether absolutely and peremptorily, as if thou hadst said [Lord, I know,

Yyy

what

what is fit for me to have, and this I have made choyce of, and desire not to want upon any terms; and as to this, let me have my will, and not be at thy disposing] and if thou hast prayed thus, thou hast reason to go and beg pardon for thy folly and intolerable pride and presumption; otherwise thou mayst fear an answer in wrath, to humble thee, and make thee know, that *thou* (r) *knowest not what to ask*; and to learn thee to be no more so rash, positive and peremptory in desiring those things which are in their own nature (f) indifferent, and may in the use prove serpents to sting thee, and not bread to nourish thee; and so could not be given to thee when such, but in wrath. But if thou hast learned to pray as thou ought'st, submitting to him who is (r) wonder full in counsel, and excellent in working, to the only wise God, and thy compassionat Father, who will not give thee a stone in stead of fish; and confining thy desires within the bounds of the promise (f) for these indifferent things only then fall under the promise, when *his & mine*, they are good to us, as hath been shown, *Part 1. Chap. 7.* and *Part 2. Chap. 2.* If thou hast thus learned to pray aright, thou needst not doubt of the success of thy prayers, but maist be assured, that though thou hast not gotten the particular that thou named in thy prayer, yet thy prayer hath been heard and answered: the true sense and meaning whereof must be this, [O Lord thou knowest what is good for me to have, or want; and this is the mercy that I desire, if it may prove a mercy and blessing indeed; but otherwise let me rather want it, then have it in wrath, and to be a snare unto me.] So that every prayer for outward and temporal things, must have a condition either tacite or expessed, and so must have two parts and members; and as we pray for such a supposed mercy upon supposition of expediency and conveniency, So we pray against it, and that it may not be given upon supposition of in expediency and hurt: Hence its evident, that the Lord in denying, when the condition of expediency faileth, or delaying till it be placed, doth hear and answer thy prayer; and if he did give the particular, he would not answer, but reject thy prayer, for under both

(r) Rom. 8.
26.

(f) *We are not now speaking of spirituals which have no place here, because those shall not be with held, no nor as to their measure and degree, as may appear from Part. 1. Chap. 7. Sec. 2.*

(r) Isa. 28.

29.

(u) 1 Tim. 1.
17.

parts of the supposition, this is it which is absolutely said and askt, [Lord do thou as a wise and tender father make choyce for thy foolish child, and do, as to the particular desired, what may prove for thy glory, the good of the Church and thy servants comfort, advantage and eternal happiness.] And when we thus pray, if the Lord did not with-hold what would be for our hurt (for otherwise (as we may suppose from, *Part. 2. Chap. 2. Sect. 2.* and what here followeth) when these outward things would prove good for us, they will not be with-held) and if he did give the particular we named, he should not answer our prayers, nor fulfill his promises, nor do according to our faith and expectation, nor according to our trust in him, or that fatherly care and providence he exerciseth towards his chosen ones; but in with-holding what we thus desired, in the supposed case of inexpediency, he answereth all those ends and cogagements.

And upon the former ground, we may yet further argue, 1. what is only *conditionally* askt, if the condition fail, it is not askt; and what is only *relatively*, and in reference to such an end loved and desired, when it will not conduce unto, but rather hinder and obstruct that end, it is not loved and desired; but rather hated and loathed. But the Saints pray for these outward and temporal things only conditionally and relatively, as we have seen, *Part 1. Chap. 7. Sect. 2.* and in the present case the condition faileth, and their subserviency to the great end; and therefore, they being thus cloathed with such circumstances, they are not askt nor desired; and therefore their prayers cannot be said to want an answer, because these are not given. 2. Such conditional petitions must have two parts, and those opposit, according to the nature of the condition, *viz.* that such a particular may be given upon the supposition of expediency, and upon the contrary supposition of hurt and inexpediency, that it may be with-held and not given; now both these conditions cannot concur, as being opposit, and so both these parts joyntly, and *in sensu composito*, cannot subsist, nor be askt, and one of them (and that the best, and which only in the supposed case is desired, and (shall I say?) absolutely

(u) When the condition is placed and included, an hypothetical proposition becometh absolute; conditionalis posita conditione fit absoluta;

(x) ask) is always heard and answered, even then when the particular is not given. 3. If our prayers must not be thus resolved (and so thus heard and answered when the particular is denied) as we would, 1. prove forgetfull of our main and great business, and the one thing necessary, in not asking in subordination therunto; and, 2. as we might prejudice the Church, and wrong others who may be also concerned therein; So, 3. we might be injurious to our own selves, in reference to our self-ends (which then must rule and mislead) for what knowest thou but in the denial there may be a reservation for some greater mercy of the same nature and kind, which would have been obstructed by thy getting what for the present thou so earnestly desired; if thou hadst come to such a place, and hadst been put in such a station and condition of life, as thou didst so greedily cover, that might have obstructed thy greater preferment, and better accommodation in the world, and then again, thy getting such a particular, might bring along with it some sad and heavy cross, which the having of such a mercy could not counter-balance, and therefore the Lord in his love, and in his pity may prevent such a great evil by with-holding a less good.

And then what hath been said in reference to the prayers of the wicked; that they are not accepted, heard, nor answered (as being an abomination to the Lord) when the particular they desired is given, may serve as a second ground for illustrating the present point, concerning the Lords hearing and answering the Saints prayers when the particular is not granted: ¹⁰ As there will hear be found parity of reason, though upon contrary grounds, So the ends and designs (keeping still the opposition) will appear to be proportionably alike, by comparing what hath been here said concerning the one, *viz.* the ends propounded in the dispensation of those mercies to the wicked; with what followeth, *Scilicet* 4. concerning the trials and disappointments of the Saints; only in the general now we may suppose, that as the Lord in wrath giveth to the (y) children of wrath, that which through their folly and abuse becometh a snare, and occasion of their ruine, So in mercy he with-holds from the vessels of mercy what would;

(v) Eph 2.3.

would harm them, and become a temptation and occasion of their hurt; and therefore, as he answereth not the prayers of the wicked when he giveth them their hearts desire. So he answereth the prayers of his servants when he withholdeth the particular they desired.

3. From the return made to Christs prayer (once and again (&)) renewed) that *the cup might pass from him*, it is evident, that the prayer may be heard and answered when the particular is not granted; for that cup did not pass away from him, but he did drink it out to the bottom, and yet it were blasphemous to imagine that Christs prayer was not heard, contrary to what he himself asserteth, Joh. 11.42. *Father, I know that thou alwaies hearest me.* And particularly, as to that prayer, the holy Spirit testifieth that *he was heard*, Heb. 5.7. (2) Mat. 26. 39, 42, 44.

And then, 4. in the general the Scriptures of truth do most clearly, fully and frequently assert, that *they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing*, Psa. 34. 10. the same is affirmed of them *that walk uprightly*, Psa. 84. 11. and of them that *fear the Lord*, Psa. 34. 9. Hence, we may well infer, since they shall want no good thing, they cannot want a return to their prayers, and a gracious answer from their God, the Lord doing what is good for them in reference to the particular they desired. And since *no evil shall befall the righteous*, Psa. 91. 10. Prov. 12. 21. &c. therefore they shall not get what may hurt them, though they should ask it upon a mistake; *all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to such as keep his covenant and his testimonies*, Psa. 25. 10. If all his paths be such, then certainly those paths in which he walketh in answering their prayers, those paths must be full of mercy and love, and of truth and fidelity in performing those promises to hear & answer them when they call upon him. There was never a prayer poured out in truth, at which the God of truth did not draw nigh, and to which he did not hearken, Psa. 145. 18, 19. all his paths are mercy and truth to all true Israelites; who can produce one exception or instance to the contrary? *He never said to such, seek ye me in vain*, Isa. 45. 19. and then there

there is a considerable word to this purpose, *Rom. 8. 28.* *We know that all things work together for good to them that love him*; if we ponder the scope of the place, we will find this general truth to have a special relation to prayer, of which the Apostle had been speaking in the two preceeding verses (where he had shewn our ignorance, and that we know not what to ask, and the need we stand in of light and help) and now, saith he, you having been assisted to do your duty and pray aright, you need not be anxious for Gods part, and that which lieth upon him to do by way of return, for ye may be assured, whether he give or with-hold the particular, he will have such a care of you, as to do nothing but what he will make contribute and *work for your good*; though we know not what to ask, yet God knoweth what to give; he will not challenge thee for asking what thou apprehended to be good for thee; if (a) upon the matter it be lawfull, and if thy desire be moderate and submissive, although, as to the particular, there may be a mistake flowing from thy ignorance of the event, and those following circumstances which thou couldst not foresee, but yet the Lord will do what he of his infinite wisdom and knowledge seeth will be indeed good and convenient for thee; and we (I, and ye believing Romans, saith the Apostle) do know that God will care for them that love him, and who in all things do make their requests known to him, he will procure their good by the fittest means; though the wicked will not know and acknowledge Gods care and fidelity in performing his promises, and therefore think it in vain to seek the Lord, yet we know, and are perswaded of his love and care: Surely the knowledge and belief of this point is a differencing mark and character, they who have no interest in Gods love and care, will not believe it towards others.

And thus its certain, that the Lord alwaies heareth his honest supplicants, *Si (b) non ad voluntatem, tamen ad utilitatem*. If not according to their desire, yet for their profit (which if our (c) desires would not hinder and obstruct, they should alwaies be answered) what? doth our kind Father grudge to give us such empty trifles which he bestoweth in

(a) Especially since his spirit may concur and assist thee in the pouring out of such a prayer; its being our duty to go to God, and bold up to him what we conceived to be good and fit for us, committing to him to make choice for us what he knows to be best. See Part 1. Chap. 9. pag. 269.
(b) Aug. *ubi supra*.
(c) Our desires are often foolish and unreasonable.

such abundance upon the wicked? would he, who hath so loved us as to give his only begotten Son to death for us, and to prepare an exceeding and (d) eternal weight of glory for us: would he with-hold these perishing things from us, if it were not for our good? *Rom.* 8. 32. Nay, if we had not askt, as we could have no solid peace, either in the having or wanting such a particular, that being the fruit of prayer, *Phil.* 4. 6, 7. So we might have (e) gotten in wrath, what the Lord now in mercy with-holdeth from thee, who hast committed the matter to God, and hast referred all to his wise, free and loving choyce. And thus, whatever be the particular ends and reasons (of which, *See* 4. / why the Lord with-holdeth such and such particular mercies as we desired, in the general it is evident, that his design herein alwaies is to prevent our hurt; and promote our comfort and happiness; and that all his paths toward us may be mercy and truth, by making all things work together for our good.

And now to the Objection as it is propounded, we answer. Although all things did come alike to all, yet they are not alike to all; though in the outward dispensation there appear no difference, yet as to the fountain from which such a dispensation did flow, the end to which it doth tend, the effect fruit, use, &c. there is a vast difference; for, those things which are mercies, blessings and pledges of love to the Saints, prove snares, judgments, and an earnest of everlasting wrath to the wicked; and what greater difference can be imagined? yea, not only is there so great an inequality & dissimilitude where they seem to be equal and alike, but also where there is an inequality, and the advantage appeareth to be on the part of the wicked, as while we compare them in their prosperity and success, and having (f) more then their heart could wish, with the godly under persecution, affliction and sore calamities, yet even thus the case is not altered, nor the difference and disproportion less; for the Saints afflictions, wants and tryals are sanctified unto them, and are made to work for their good, as being included in these *all things* which must pay tribute to the godly, and be subservient to them in their great work; that concerneth the glory of God and their own salvation, *Rom.* 8. 28.

and

(d) 2 Cor. 4. 17.

(e) Deus cui cedis iratus quod negas propitius, vld. Aug. loco jam citato.

(f) Pl. 73: 16.

and the wicked's full cup, is full of poyson, and in the belly will become like gall and worm-wood: The Scripture speaks of a strange kind of wine, *Rev. 14. 10.* viz. *the wine of the wrath and indignation of the everliving God*, a part whereof is mingled with all their delicious liquors, which makes them prove so deadly and astonishing; the wicked will never be able to digest or vomit up this wine, the fastest and strongest among them will not be able to wrestle with it, though they cannot flee from it, and therefore in despair, when they find it begin to work, and cease upon their vitals, they, even the Kings of the earth, the great, rich and mighty men will in vain cry to the mountains and rocks to fall on them, and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb, from which they cannot flee, and before which they cannot stand, *Rev. 6. 15, 16, 17.* and in that day every one shall be able to discern the great difference that shall be between the righteous and the wicked, and between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not, *Mal. 3. 18.* and after that unto all eternity their lot and outward condition shall be no more alike; that shall be the general day of *audience and discrimination*; no more prosperity to the wicked, nor affliction to the Saints; all tears shall then be wiped from their eyes, but the wicked shall be cast into that lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, *Rev. 7. 17. Rev. 14. 10. Mat. 13. 42. Mat. 25. 41, 46. Isa. 3. 10, 11.*

What? will ye, whose priviledge it is to have a good understanding, *Psa. 111. 10.* become so foolish and brutish as to envy or fret because of the prosperity of evil doers, or the afflictions of the Saints? *Psa. 73. 3, 14, 22.* and wilt thou be so basely ungrate as upon such an account once to question his love, care and fidelity? all whose parts towards thee are mercy and truth, especially then while he will not suffer thee through thy folly to undo thy self, nor put a sword in thy hand whereby thou wouldst offer violence to thy own soul? and what are all our lustings, our immoderate and peremptory desires after such and such creature-enjoyments, but as roving fits of distempered brains seeking after that which may occasion their ruine? Let us not then be so earnest and perem-

ptory

story in such desires, nor too anxious concerning the event of our prayers for them, let us not measure the answer and success of prayer by such a rule, but let us leave all upon the care, love and wisdom of our Father.

You will say, wherefore then should we pray for those things, since we may not be anxious concerning the success of such prayers? *Ans.* As we must pray, So we ought to pray so as we may prevail; and as we must look to our prayers, So after their success; but yet we must not be anxious concerning the particular, whether in kind it be given or not; and though the particular we apprehend to be good and desirable, be not (g) good for us at such a time, yet to pray for it in a regular way is good and acceptable to God, and may flow from the breathing and assistance of the Spirit, who helpeth us to mind our duty, but not to look to the decree of God concerning the giving or with-holding of such a particular; now the Lord having put such a price and opportunity into our hand, as to see and consider such a mercy which in it self is not evil, and may be lawfully desired, and may prove a blessing to us, it is our duty to improve that opportunity, and to hold out the case to God, referring all to his wise and holy will, and begging that he would do what may be best for us: And thus, as, 1. thou dost thy duty, and obeyest the command *to make thy request known to God in every thing*, Phil. 4. 6. So, 2. now thou mayst have peace, while otherwise a tender conscience in no business, case or particular, can have rest, for untill we recommend our case to God, how can we expect his blessing? But, 3. by prayer, we will not only thus have a kind of negative peace, and freedom from the challenges of conscience, but also a positive and promising peace, Phil. 4. 7. where after the exhortation to pray in every case, there is a promise, not that we shall get the very particular desired, but whatever we get or want, we shall get the peace of God to guard our hearts, both against anxiety (h) and care, and against grief and disquietness.

(g) *Hic & nunc, & nobis,*

(h) *As anxious care is impertinent to us who are servants and children, for that lieth on the father and on the master of the family, so it is unfit, and*

can do us no good, but rather provoke the Lord to smite us, Mat. 6. 27. and prayer is prescribed as a remedy of this care, Phil. 4. 6. and *will we then make our prayers become jewel to feed us? by being anxious concerning the event and success of our prayers.*

what we desired is not given, and the right and sanctified use of the mercy when it is given; our prayers cannot want an answer, which shall be better then all outward trifles; to wit, *the peace of God that passeth all understanding*. If the answer quiet and content our heart, it must be full and satisfactory, for all we can have is peace and contentment, and let the Lord speak it by what mean he pleaseth, whether by giving or with-holding such a mercy, it is no great matter, but certainly some one way or other *he will speak peace to his Saints*, Psa. 85. 8. And as this spiritual peace is thus promised, So it is promising and evidencing; 1. it declareth that God hath accepted our prayers; for, what else is this peace but a messenger from heaven to show us that the King hath heard and welcomed our supplication? And then, 2. its an earnest and pledge of more, and that the Lord will make his dispensation (as to the particular) to work for our good; and thus, as such a prayer is good and acceptable (whatever be the indifferency of the object in its own nature) So it is a mean for good to us, and for procuring the blessing, which as it is sought, So it will not be with-held, whether the particular in kind be given or not; such a prayer will prove a mean for good, though not by the mean that thou didst desire and name, the Lord will bless thee in reference to the particular, by doing what he will make prove best for thee, though he lay (i) the right hand on *Ephraim*, and prefer him to *Manasseh*.

(i) The Saints faith doth offer (as Joseph did his two sons) both the having or wanting of such a particular mercy to the Lords choice; only they peremptorily desire the blessing: but yet they set the supposed mercy to the right hand (as is *Joseph*) and desire that it may be preferred; but the Lord often, &c.

And thus it may appear, that though the particular be not given, yet the prayer may not only be said to be *accepted* and *heard*, but also *answered*; though we desire not to contend for words, yet we think, that when ever the Lord *heareth*, then he may be said to *answer*; because his *hearing*, is never separated from his *speaking*; for, either then he stayeth the heart with this spiritual peace, or secretly up-holdeth the supplicant that he faint not, or some one way or other doth him good; but if any will refer the answer of prayer to a sensible manifestation of Gods hand, either by giving what was asked, or making some notable compensation and exchange; we will not debate such a nominal question;

but

but its certain, the Lord may accept and hearken to thy prayer, a long time before thou meet with any such sensible manifestation of his acceptance.

But *wo* (k) *to the wicked!* when shall they hear of their prayers? though many mercies be dispensed to them by the hand of a common providence, yet nothing in mercy, and as a return of their supplications; though they have a civil right (which no man dare challenge) to what they enjoy, and whatever grant and donation from the Lord, or tithes by his providence they can pretend, yet they by their ingratitude and abuse of these mercies (which they have employed as so many weapons to fight against the Giver) have forfeited all that right, and may every moment be thrust out of all their possessions as *tenants at will*, and certainly one day the *heir* (l) *of all things* will reckon with them as thieves and usurpers for meddling with, and taking possession of his goods without his licence, and for not acknowledging his propriety, by employing them for his honour; yea, and often here he reckoneth with such, they *sit in slippery places*, Psa. 73. 18. they are not like the people of God, *who dwell in a sure habitation*, Isa. 32. 18. *as the whirl-wind passeth, so is the wicked no more; but the righteous is an everlasting foundation*, Prov. 10. 25. the wicked get none of the *sure mercies of David*, promised to the Elect, Isa. 55. 3. but *swars, fire, brimstone, and an horrible tempest is the portion of their cup*; they cannot promise to themselves an hours security from such a storm, they know not how soon the Lord will thus rain upon them, Psa. 11. 6. The right of providence is a mutable title and foundation, revocable at pleasure; the Lord may change his work, and the dispensations of providence when he will, but he cannot change nor alter his Word and break his promise, upon which the mercies of the Saints are founded, and therefore their mercies are (m) *real and stable*; they are *sure* because they have such an immutable ground as the Word of God; and they are the *mercies of David*, and therefore they are *real*, because they are given for the merit and intercession of the typified David, they come to them through the covenant of promise, where-

(k) Isa. 3. 11.

(l) Heb. 1. 2.

(m) Mercies given in return to prayer are, 1. real; 2. stable; 3. costly; 4. pure; 5. witnessing; 6. promising.

(n) Every
one of the
Saints mercies
may be called
Gad, for a
troop cometh;

by the forfeiture is taken off, and the curse removed; their mercies are mercies indeed, and no wonder they being so *costly* (though cheap to us) they are the purchase of blood, they stood Christ at a dear rate: they are *pure* mercies, the blessing of the Lord taketh away the sting and thorns from them, *Prov.* 10. 22. they are *witnessing* and sealing mercies, they are as so many testimonies of the love of our Father, and of the acceptance of our prayers; and they are (n) *promising* mercies, and pledges of more; yea, and of all things whatsoever we shall stand in need of: But the wicked are not so, they are fed as oxen for the slaughter, and their mercies are as so many fore-runners of their wo and misery; their blessings are cursed, and their mercies given in wrath and in judgment.

SECT. III.

How we may know, 1. Whether the Lord hath heard our prayers when he denieth or delayeth to give what we asked; and, 2. Whether the mercies we receive be the fruits of Gods general bounty conveyed to us by the hand of common providence, or given in love as a gracious return to our prayers?

Psa. 66. 19. Verily God hath heard me, he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

WE will not stay to prove, that the Saints may discern the Lords voice while he answereth their prayers, there being so many instances hereof in the Word, and that not only when he giveth the particular mercy they petitioned, as to *David*, *Psa.* 116. 1, 2. *Psa.* 66. 19. *Hannah*, *1 Sam.* 1. 27. &c. but also when the particular is withheld, as from *Paul*, who yet discerned the Lords voice, and what he said in answer to his prayers, *2 Cor.* 12. 9. Neither will it be needfull to shew, that we should hearken to the Lords voice, and observe what he saith; 1. for strengthening our faith by such experiences of the Lords bounty and fidelity; 2. that

that we may pay our vows, and return to him the sacrifice of praise; and, 3. that a new engagement may be laid upon our heart to improve his mercies to the honour of his Name.

But all the difficulty lieth in this, how, and by what means we may discern when the Lord speaketh, and when he is silent at our prayers; and we will find the case more difficult as to its first branch, *viz.* when the Lord withholdeth or delayeth to give what we ask, because we must then wrestle against sense and carnal reason: but yet there is difficulty enough to discern from what fountain, and by what means our mercies come when we get what we desired. We shall speak to both those branches of the question, which hath been propounded by several practical Divines; but the first (so far as we know) who at any length hath handled this case, is the judicious Mr. (a) *Goodwin*; to whom (b) others have added little or nothing, but none hath spoken so fully; therefore we shall only name some few particulars, referring to him for their larger explication, adding but a word of observation, for the right improvement of these rules.

And first, we will speak to the case in general, and then to its several branches; 1. then by these and such like marks, we may know that our prayers are accepted and heard, whether the particular we desired be given or not; as, 1. (c) when the Lord stirreth the heart up to pray and enlargeth the affections in prayer; 2. if by, or in prayer, he quiet the heart, and make thee *Hannah*-like come from the Kings presence with a contented and calmed spirit; 3. if whilst thou art praying the Lord smile upon thee, and lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and make any intimation to thee concerning his love and thy adoption and son-ship; 4. if he stir up in the heart a particular faith whereby thou assuredly expectest the very particular thou desired, enabling thee to wait for it mangre all impediments and discouragements (but this now-a-days is not very usual;) 5. when the Lord doth put a restless importunity in the heart, whereby it continueth instant in prayer.

(a) Goodwin;
return of
prayer chap.
5, 6, 7, 8,
9.

(b) Such as
Mr. Fenner;
serm on Lam.
3. 57. Isaac
Ambros in
mediis Chris.
Love 200.
Chris. Gurn
nal part 1.
pag 43. and
part. 3. pag.
362.

(c) Goodwin
cb. 5. observat
ions taken
from before
and in pray
ing.

(d) Cha. 6.

after prayer,

how, is success

may be discerned.

“ prayer, (though with submission as to the particular) 6.

“ (d) if after prayer thou walk obediently and circumspect-

“ ly; if thou be as carefull to hearken to the voice of the

“ Lord in his commandments, as thou art desirous that he

“ should hearken to thy supplications; 7. if all the

“ while the Lord delayeth, thou wait upon him, and look

“ up for an answer; 8. but if thou get what thou desired,

“ and in that very way, and by these very means which thou

“ pitchedst upon (as it often falleth out) what needest thou

“ doubt of the success of thy prayers?

“ But now we come to particulars; and, 1. “ by these di-

“ rections we may know, that our prayers are heard when

(e) Cha. 9.

“ the thing we desired is not (e) accomplished; as, 1. if

“ thou canst discern any thing given by way of commutati-

“ on and exchange, thou wilt not readily more doubt of the

“ success of thy prayer, then if thy desire had been accom-

“ plisht: But though thou canst not discern a compensation

“ made to thee; yet if, 2. thou wast not peremptory in thy

“ desire, if thou durst entrust the Lord, and roll all over up-

“ on his wise choice, thou needst not fear least he dis-appoint

“ thee [if thou hast prayed submissively to his will, thou

“ mayst be assured that he will do what will be most for thy

“ well] 3. “ would not this support thee, if the Lord should

“ deal with thee as he did with *Moses*, giving to him a (f)

(f) Deut. 34.

8. &c.

“ *Pisgab*-sight of that land into which he so earnestly desired

“ to enter; if the Lord do yield far in such a particular, as

“ if he laboured to give thee all satisfaction, would not that

“ quiet thy heart? Nay, 4. if he discover his hand by some

“ remarkable dispensation in suspending his ordinary influ-

“ ence, or turning second causes, even then when it would

“ have appeared, that such a mercy as thou desiredst, was

“ brought to the birth; this may be an evidence to thee, that

“ the Lord hath some special respect to thee and to thy pray-

“ ers, and some special design in with-holding such a suppo-

“ sed mercy [its true, if there be any] (g) wicked way in

(g) Psa. 139.

24.

“ thee, such a dispensation may be for thy warning and in-

“ struction; but yet alwaies it is in mercy and in love to-

“ wards thee, who committing thy way to God, dost call

upon

upon him in sincerity.] 5. (b) "If the Lord fill the heart," not only, 1. with a silent *submission* unto his will, but also, 2. with a holy contentment and satisfaction in his choyce, as being best for thee; and thus, if, 3. out of faith thou canst praise and render thanks to God, resting "on his love, care and fidelity, whatever sense and carnal reason depone and suggest to the contrary, this may be an evidence to thee, that the spirit that now resteth upon thee, hath led thee to the throne, and hath not suffered thee to go away empty; [You will say, but who is he that useth to praise God for denying what he askt, and doth not rather complain and mourn when he meeteth with such a dispensation? *Ans.* Our ignorance, unbelief and groundless jealousy

(b) *This and the following bold words, shew a sanctified denial or rather a gracious gram securum cardinem precationis habet upon the heart,*

makes us too often take a quite contrary course, to what we ought and should follow; and thus, while we are called to praise, we are ready to murmur and complain; and the cause of this our error and mistake (besides our unbelief and sensuality) is our negligence, and because we will not be at the pains, as to bring our hearts into a right frame, and to pray with the whole heart, so neither to reflect vpon our hearts and prayers, and to compare them with the rule, and those qualifications which the promise doth require, that thus we might judge aright of the success of our work.] 6. "If thou be not discouraged, neither entertainest hard thoughts of thy master and his work, if thou love not prayer worse, but continuest instant in that exercise, not daring to run away from God in a fit of discontentment [as this may be an evidence of thy patience, submission and (i) faith, So also of the acceptance and success of thy prayer; in that the spirit of prayer and supplication doth thus rest upon thee, thou mayst conclude, that thou hast prayed in the Spirit, and that therefore thy prayers cannot want an answer.]

(i) *That which the Lord mainly regardeth, is thy faith, without which a would on weary, and yet thy patience and submission abstraitly considered, cannot be so pleasing to God. For (saith our Author here) it moves ingenious natures to see men take repulses and denials well, which proud persons will not do; and so it moves God.*

Now we proceed to the other branch of the question, viz. how we may discern whether mercies come to us by the hand of a common providence, or in return to our prayers? 1. (k)

"If we can discern the Lords hand in a more then ordinary manner, we may be confident he hath hearkened to our voice; as first, when he bringeth a thing to pass through

(k) *Ibid. chap. many 7.*

"many difficulties that stood in the way. 2. When he pro-
 "videeth and facilitateth the means, and makes them con-
 "spire and combine in the accomplishing of a mercy for us. 3.
 "When he doth it suddainly, and ere thou art aware of it;
 "as *Josephs* and *Peters* delivery from prison, and the Isra-
 "elites return from *Babylon*; they were as men in a dream,
 "and could scarce believe what was done, because so suddain-
 "ly and unexpectedly. 4. If God do above what we did ask
 "or think, giving an over-plus and casting in other mercies
 "together with that which we desired, and (perhaps for a
 "long time) prayed for. 5. By making some remarkable
 "circumstance a token for good, and a seal of his love and
 "care; and thus a circumstance small, in its self, may be
 "magnum indicium, as the dogs not barking at the chil-
 "dren of *Israel* when they went out of *Egypt* in the night,
 "Exod. 11. 7. &c.

2. "The consideration of the time when such a mercy is
 "accomplisht and given, may help us to discern whe-
 "ther it be in answer to our prayers; as, 1. if at, or about
 "that very time when thou art most instant and earnest in
 "prayer for it, as *Peter* was sent from prison to the Church,
 "while they were assembled to pray for him, *Act.* 12. 12.
 "2. if in the most fit and acceptable time, as first, when
 "thou hast most need, and thy extremity is great, as *Peters*
 "delivery in that night which *Herod* had decreed should be
 "his last; Secondly, to encourage thee against some new
 "trial and conflict; Thirdly, when thy heart is most wean-
 "ed from such a temporal mercy; and thus [thy heart is
 "fitted to receive and improve it, which otherwise might have
 "proven a wofull snare, and might have become thine Idol,
 "if it had been given before the inordinacy of thy affection
 "was cured] "as the Lord doth not withhold such mercies
 "from his servants out of want of love, So neither so much
 "for what is (1) past, as for the present evil disposition of
 "their hearts, and to keep them from hurt thereby.

3. "If we see the Lord observe, as it were, some proportion
 "in his dealing with our prayers and walk; as there is often
 "a proportion between sin and the punishment of it, So be-

"tween
 1.

(1) Former
 sins, if be-
 wailed and
 pardoned, do
 not binder the
 success of
 prayer.

"tween our work and reward; and thus when thy
 "desires were spiritual, and thy prayers fervent, thy suc-
 "cess in business was proportionable; but now thou art
 "grown faint in prayer, and negligent in thy walk, and all
 "thy hopes are, as it were, dashed; and now, while (1) *Moses* (1) *Exod.*
 "his hands fall down, *Amaleck* prevaleth; if, as the 17. 11.
 "more pure and spiritual thy ends in praying were, the mer-
 "cy proveth the more pure and stable; and the less zeal and
 "fervency thou expressed in prayer, and the more self-in-
 "terest did prevail, the more of bitterness and worm-wood
 "is mingled with the mercy when granted, &c. [and how
 should the consideration hercof, that the Lord will not-
 withstanding our failings, yet regard, and in some manner
 answer our prayers, and discover his hand, & that he takes no-
 tice of our way and walk? how should this, 1. humble us for
 our manifold failings, and not regarding the Lords hand; 2. stir
 us up to thankfulness for thus warning, and waiting upon us,
 and filling our hands with so many mercies; 3. provoke us to
 diligence and circumspection, zeal and sincerity in every part
 of his worship, and in our whole course and conversation?]

4. "We may discern whether our mercies be given in an-
 "swer to our prayers by their (m) *effects* upon the heart; (m) *Ibid.*
 "as, 1. if they prove not fewel to feed thy lusts, but do cha. 8.
 "rather kindle thy zeal for, and love to God; if they draw
 "thy heart nearer to him, and make thee rejoyce more in
 "his favour discovered by the giving of such or such a mercy,
 "then in the thing it self; and to prize it as a greater mercy,
 "that thy prayer hath been heard, then that such an
 "outward thing hath been given. 2. If the receiving of
 "mercies enlargeth thy heart with thankfulness, self-love
 "makes us more forward to pray, then to give thanks; but
 "thankfulness of all duties proceeds most from pure grace;
 "if then the Spirit of grace doth stir thee up to praise God
 "for his mercies, he hath helped thee to pray, and to ob-
 "tain such a mercy by thy prayer; it must then be a good
 "sign, that a mercy hath been won by prayer, when it is
 "worn with thankfulness. 3. If the receiving of mercies
 "make thee carefull; 1. to pay thy vows made in prayer;

"and, 2. to improve what thou hast received to the honour
 "of the Giver, it is an evidence that such mercies have
 "come from God; otherwise they would not thus lead in to
 "him. 4. If thou look over second causes, by faith ac-
 "knowledging his sole hand, who governeth and ordereth
 "second causes according to his pleasure; it is an evidence
 "of thy dependence on him, and that thou hast prayed in
 "faith, and so must have prevailed. 5. If the mercy ob-
 "tained encourage thee to continue in prayer, and in all
 "other cases to run to God; making thee say, with him,
 "therefore Will I call upon God so long as I live, Psa. 116.
 "1, 2. if it quicken thy diligence, and strengthen thy faith in
 "prayer, its a token the Lord hath spoken, and thou hast
 "heard his answer. 6. If with the mercy there come some
 "evidence of love, if the Lord smile upon thee, and lift up
 "the light of his countenance, and intimat his favour,
 "there will be no place left for doubting, since thou hast not
 "only a love-token, but a letter also with it, to bear wit-
 "ness of his love. And, 7. the event will bring with it an
 "additional confirmation, that such a mercy hath been ob-
 "tained, and sanctified by prayer; if it prove a real and
 "stable mercy, if the trouble, vexation and snare, that
 "otherwise might accompany it, be removed, it may be an
 "evidence that it is a blessing indeed, *Prov.* 10. 22.

(n) A. Cautio
 on.

Now for the right (n) improvement of these directions,
 I deny not, that these and the like particulars deserve our
 serious consideration, and when they occur, may be help-
 full for discovering the Lords mind in his dispensations to-
 wards us; but we would distinguish and put a difference be-
 tween those necessary *qualifications* of prayer, which are
 required on our part, and which belong to the performance
 it self, and so are indispensably required at our hands, and
 between those gracious *dispensations* which the Lord accord-
 ing to his meer good pleasure may impart or withhold.
 As to the 1. we would carefully observe those directions
 that concern our duty, for, if we be negligent in prayer, and
 in those other duties that relate thereto, or if we be loose
 in our walk, we may fear the rod, but cannot expect a gra-

cious.

cious return to our formal prayers. But, 2. as to those signs that depend upon the good pleasure of the Lord to bestow or not, we would beware of curiosity in requiring, expecting, or looking to much after them; and of rashness and presumption in laying too much weight upon them if they should occur: Therefore the safest and surest course, must be not to lean too much to sensible demonstrations of providence, but rather to reflect on Gods Word, both on the word of *promise* and *precept*, and according to that rule to judge of our prayers and their success; and thus, though we can espy no ground of hope and encouragement from any dispensation of providence, yet if we find our prayers run parallel with the promise, and the qualifications and conditions thereto annexed, and that we have prayed according to the will of God, both as to the matter and manner of performance, we need not doubt of their success, whether we have gotten the particular we askt or not.

But here it may be enquired, whether those mercies which the Saints receive when they are on the declining hand, and are negligent in their walk, and cold and formal in their prayers, be given in return to their prayers? *Ans.* This question doth not concern tender Christians who are circumspect in their walk, and who are busie and diligent (though not so enlarged, neither have such melting affections, nor such a measure of confidence as sometimes they have had) in prayers, and other ordinances; whatever hard conclusions such may draw against themselves, yet their state is safe, their prayers are accepted, and their mercies and enjoyments sanctified, as may appear from, *Part 3. Chap. 2.* Neither, 2. do we now enquire concerning the health, wealth and prosperity of the wicked, and the success of their prayers and vain oblations; their seeming mercies and blessings being cursed, and their prayers an abomination to the Lord, as hath been shown in the preceding Section. But, 3. we now only enquire concerning the Saints, and the success of their prayers, when they are under a distemper, and are negligent in their soul-trade and carriage, and cold and formal in their prayers, we do not separate these two in the question,

A s s s s s

because

the most devout, circumspect and active Saints, may sometimes be lukewarm, and meet with little life or quickning in prayer or any other ordinance, yet that is but for a short season; it is but a fit, not a state and abiding condition; and before an answer come, there may be a supply (I do not say a compensation by way of merit and satisfaction for the former negligence, but that) there may intervene such acceptable activity and fervency in prayer, as will prevail, notwithstanding the fore-going slackness and deadness; and then whatever be the issue of their former, dead and lifeless prayers, yet their after-fervency will not want a reward, and their enjoyments will thereby be sanctified, and their mercies will be given in return thereto; and in this case there is no ground for anxiety and fear, neither hath the present question place here, unless it were to satisfy curiosity; and thus if we consider these formal prayers abstractly and by themselves, and without any reference to the after enlargement and activity in that exercise, we do not deny, that such prayers may be included in the question, though it mainly relate to a state of negligence and formality, and to such deadness in prayer as hath been usual and customary, and to which way hath been given for a considerable space of time, during which the mercies thus prayed for have been given. Unto which now we answer, That such mercies should not be esteemed to be the fruit of prayer, nor be given in return thereto; 1. because such prayers are no prayers in Gods account; since the heart is not set a work, and doth not concur in such lazy performances: and can that which is no prayer, prevail? and will the Lord hearken to any voice in (o) prayer that proceedeth not from the heart? See *Part 1. Chap. 4.* 2. Because this luke-warm temper is much displeasing to God; he threatneth to punish it, *Rev. 3. 16.* and will he then reward it, and bestow mercies for its sake? 3. Such prayers are not regular, but are many wayes defective, and come short of the conditions annexed to the promise of audience; and therefore ought not lay claim to, and cannot obtain the thing promised. 4. We might here apply the several particulars required

(o) Though in such a case is may get the name, yet it is rather the picture of prayer, then obeying it self.

to the audience of prayer; *Sett. 2.* which will be found to be here wanting, no less then there they appeared to be lacking in the prayers of the wicked; and between those two cases there is no considerable difference, except as to the state of the person; so that we might here resume the arguments we there used in the case belonging to that place.

Hence, we may conclude, that the Lord cannot be said to give to his children under such a distemper any of those mercies *in trust*, and to accomplish the promises (unless we understand such absolute promises as belong to the elect before their conversion, or some general promises concerning the Saints perseverance, repentance, reformation, establishment, &c. in which those mercies cannot be said to be directly included) but out of his absolute sovereignty and mere good pleasure, and therefore such a dispensation (as not flowing from any covenant-transaction, promise and encouragement) may be altered when it shall seem good to the Lord, and all those mercies thus given, may be removed, and the contrary evils and judgments inflicted, without any breach as to the Lords fidelity and faithfulness in performing his promises, they having so far (p) forfeited a right to these, as that during that state of deadness and formality in his worship, they cannot plead and lay claim to any of these, as belonging to them upon the account of any ordinance or duty performed by them; since they come short of those conditions and gracious qualifications which the promise doth require, and suppose to be in all those to whom they will be accomplished.

But if it be further askt, whether in this case mercies be given in mercy and love, or in wrath and paternal anger? *Ans.* We spake to this question in a word, *Part. 3. Chap. 2. Sett. 3.* and now again we affirm, that there can be no general rule given here, but we must judge by the effect and event; 1. if these mercies humble us, and become as so many cords to draw us in to the fountain from which they flow, if they open our eyes and make us see the evil of our ways, if they engage and set the heart a work to wonder and ad-

(p) It is not a complete and absolute forfeiture, because the right and jus in actu primo (that I may so speak) is not lost, so that when/over this obstruction is removed, the Saints may pursue their former claim without a new grant and donation: it must rather be a liquidation on this a forfeiture.

(a) Cant. 8. 7.

adore the patience and kindness of him whose *love (q) many waters cannot quench*, and if they make us blush and be ashamed when we consider the inequality and disproportion that is between our wayes and God's wayes towards us, and resolve with the prodigal (though the case be not the same, nor the distance so great) to return and go to our Father, being convinced that such a lazy and negligent walk doth rather tend to a separation from, then an union with God, &c. if this be the fruit of these mercies, they must be given in love. But, 2. if they lull us a sleep, and make us secure, as if our state were safe, and our performances acceptable because successfull, and thus followed with outward mercies, they must be given in wrath (not pure and vindictive, but paternal and castigatory) for this dallying in his worship, and with his ordinances. So that the Lord may for a while punish and chastize his children as with rods, so with mercies, to make us know that there is so much of the old root in the best, that if the Lord with-draw his hand and with-hold the blessing, neither rods nor mercies could do us good, but the venom within us would suck poison out of the most pleasant flowers, and turn the most healing medicines into deadly corrosives: Let us not then rest on our enjoyments, though thou be a Son thy Father may grant thy desire in anger; parents when most grieved and displeased with their children, may give way to them, and let them have their will without controll, but ere it be long the father will chide his son, and upbraid him for his meddling and taking upon him; and then the son (if he be not an unnatural wretch) could wish that his liberty had rather been restrained, then his father in anger given way to his course; and who among the genuin Sons of Zion, would not rather choose to be under the rod, then to have his hearts desire with the displeasure of his heavenly Father? O! then do not mistake, as if thou hadst with thy fathers leave and good will, because thou didst ask, and he hath answered thy desire; for, he may *give thee in wrath* (as he did the Israelites, *Psal. 78. 29. 31.*) *thine own hearts desire, and not with hold the request of thy lips.* Let us then ex-

aming

amine our hearts and wayes, and then rejoyce in our mercies; let us observe the Apostles method, 1 Joh. 3. 14, 15. and judge of our having and receiving by the audience of our prayers, (which must be known, not by sensible demonstrations of providence, but by comparing our prayers with the right rule, *viz.* the will of God revealed in his commands and promises) but if we proceed contrarily, and conclude that our prayers are heard because *we have the petitions we desired of him*, we may readily mistake and apprehend these prayers to be heard and answered, whereby the Lord hath been provok't and dishonoured; O! but when it is with us as it was with him, *Psa.* 21. 2, 6. when the Lord gives us our hearts desire, and with-holds not the request of our lips; and we rejoyce in his salvation, and are glad because he lifts up his countenance upon us; when these are joyned together, then is our peace stable, and our comforts solid; but when we rejoyce in mercies and grieve the God of our mercies, our joy will end in mourning.

SECT. I V.

A modest enquiry after the reason, holy designs, and ends why the Lord delayeth, or denieth the particular mercy that was desired, though he accept and answer our prayers.

Psa. 30. 18. *Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you, ----- and that he may have mercy upon you, for the Lord is a God of judgment.*

2 Cor. 12. 8, 9. *For this thing, I besought the Lord thrice, ----- and he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee.*

THe present question is not concerning the Lords hiding himself from the prayers, either of the wicked or of the Saints, (that being the matter of the following Chapter) but concerning such and such a way of answering the *effectual fervent prayer of the righteous*; which must prevail and cannot want a return) *viz.* 1. why the Lord for so long a time

time delayeth to give what he purposeth at length to give;
 2. why he denyeth and with-holdeth the particular mercy that was askt, and will rather give some other thing (which will be better for us) in lieu and consideration of what was desired, and thus will rather make a gracious compensation, then grant the mercy in kind that was desired? We shall begin with the last, as being many a time the sad tryal and exercise of the Saints, who not seeing the Lords design, nor observing the compensation (it haply being in spirituals which are not so easily discerned) have been ready to apprehend such a dispensation to be in wrath, and that the Lord hath hid himself from their prayers.

But here it would be remembred, that our work is not to enquire after the meritorious and procuring cause, which by way of demerit doth provoke the Lord either to deny or delay, because although the Lord delay to give or deny what was askt, yet he doth not (as the question supposeth) either deny or delay the acceptance and hearing of our prayers; yea, such a denial and delay is not only in mercy and love, but by
 (a) way of answer to our prayers; and he who knew no sin, did meet with such a return to his prayers, *Mat. 26.39, 42, 44.* And therefore now we must only enquire concerning the holy ends and gracious designs the Lord propoundeth in such a dispensation; under which we would not have the castigation of his people to be comprehended; for, albeit in his purpose, and in the issue that hath much love in it, yet it being in it self grievous, bitter and afflictive, and not a fit (b) object of our prayers, it cannot so properly be said to be given by way of return to them, yet since it proceeds from love, and may be very profitable to us, and thus may be askt conditionally and comparatively (as hath been (c) shown) we shall in the close add a word concerning it; though still it would be considered, that there is a great difference between this, and those other designs which have nothing of anger and wrath in them, and here the object it self being absolutely considered is (d) evil, a fruit and punishment of sin, and a testimony of divine displeasure, and therefore whatever be said of the fruit and event, yet the thing it self abstractly

(a) See Sect. 2.

(b) See Part.
 2. Chap. 3.

(c) Ibid.

(d) *Malum
 Gen.*

abstractly considered, cannot well be called a return and answer of prayer.

Now let us name some of those gracious ends for which the Lord denieth to give the particular mercy we desired; as, 1. the *exercise* of our faith and patience: graces are given us for use, as talents wherewith we should trade and gain, and not to be laid up in a napkin to rust and corrupt, and therefore its needfull, that the Lord in his providence should offer occasions for their exercise; as in the present case, while he with-holdeth our hearts desire, then in patience to submit to his holy counsel, and still to depend upon him, as it must be the work of honest supplicants; So, 2. it is their *tryal*; thus the sincerity of their hearts and reality of their grace is brought to the touch-stone, not only must our graces be exercised for their growth and encrease, but also for their tryal and discovery; and to give Satan, the world, yea and our own hearts an evidence of their truth; yea, and sometimes of their strength and perfection, if notwithstanding we meet with no sensible demonstrations, yet we will believe God's Word of promise, depend upon him. and patiently bear a seeming repulse and denial. 3. Hereby the Lord would draw our hearts off from the creature, that we may enjoy a more full and immediat communion with himself; he will cut off the streams, that we may run to the fountain it self, to have a supply and an up-making there; the Lord will with-hold many creature-enjoyments that we may know our home not to be here, and that our minority is not yet past, nor the inheritance to be yet intrusted to us, as being but pupils who must depend and roll themselves and their affairs over upon the care and fidelity of another; and that thus our hearts may be enlarged with longing desires after that day, when our wills shall run parallel with our good, and the glory and purpose of our Master. 4. To prevent our hurt; we are ready to mistake, and to ask a serpent in stead of an egge, but God will not grant such foolish desires, but *will* (according to Christs (*) prayer) *keep us* (thus, as it were, against our wills) *from the evil of the world*; 1. from the evil of temptation, for often (f) such

(e) Job. 17.

^{25.}
(f) See Sec.

^{2a}

things prove an occasion of sin ; 2. from the evil of sufferings ; for riches , honours and pleasures have often proven a precipice from which the men of the world have been cast headlong ; 5. to promote our good and greater advantage , what we desire may prove obstructive of a greater mercy , either spiritual or temporal , and the Lord in his pity and love will not suffer such a block and impediment to be cast into our way ; 6. for our instruction ; what is said of the cross, *schola crucis*, *schola lucis* , may well be applied to this dispensation (which often, through our ignorance and mistake, proveth a sad affliction to us) thus we may learn no more to live by sense , and hereby we may be set a work to examine our hearts and wayes more narrowly , that we may know whether such a dispensation proceedeth from anger or love , and thus we may be brought to espy what formerly did escape our view, &c. nay, here we might alledge all those motives which prevail with the Lord to afflict his people , and honest servants while he doth not pursue any quarrel against them ; as in the case of *Job*, of the Apostles and Martyrs ; for , as this case is much like to that , this being often very grievous to us , and looking affliction-like , So the ends and motives on the Lords part , will be found to be much alike , and for the most part the same.

(g) *Tanto quippe illud quod valde magnum est sumus capax ; quanto & fidelius credimus & speramus firmius , & de-fideramus ar-dentius.*

As to the second branch of the question, *viz.* those ends for which the Lord delayeth to give what he purposeth at length to give ; we might here resume several particulars mentioned in the former head ; as there also might be applied much of what we are now to say ; these cases not being much different as to the present enquiry , since both those dispensations flow from one and the same fountain of love, wisdom , care and fidelity of a compassionate father towards his children and servants. 1. Then the Lord delays to give till we be fitted and (g) prepared to receive , and that such a dispensation may be a mean to humble and prepare us ; every thing is good and beautifull in its season , and the Lord knows best how to time our mercies right ; if the Lord should give in our time , and before we be prepared to receive and improve , such a gift would be as medicine unseasonably

sonably taken, which would rather encrease and beget, then remove diseases; but as the Lord thus delayeth till we be fitted to receive and improve his mercies aright; So, 2. till other things be fitted, and be in readines to joyn with the desired mercy for our good, that thus (according to that sweet, though little pondred or believed word, *Rom. 8.28.*) all things may work together for our good; that impediments may be removed, and other means may be placed and joyn hands with such a mercy, that fit occasions may be offered, and such circumstances may combine, &c. and thus a considerable space of time may interveen before the right and fit season come. 3. To make us prize the Lords bounty the more when he satisfilleth our desire, and to make us the more thankfull for the mercy; (b) *cito data vilescunt*, soon and easily gotten, little prized, and soon forgotten. 4. To make us pray more frequently and importunately; (i) *Deus differt dare ut tu discas orare*, the Lord delayeth that we may add both to the number and measure of our prayers, that we may become both more assiduous, and more ardent supplicants. 5. That at length he may appear for our greater comfort; *the Lord waiteth that he may be gracious*, and that our mercies may be full, compleat and stable. 6. To learn us that hard lesson of submission, and that we may not dare to limit and prescribe to the Lord, that we may patiently wait and look up to him untill he show us his loving kindness; to make us examples to others of patience, dependence and self-denial, &c. I have not insisted on these particulars, because many of them, or such like are more fully handled, and applied to a more (k) general case, by the judicious Mr. Gee in his elaborat Treatise concerning prayer-obstruction, Chap. 4. But what hath been said may suffice for convincing us of our impatience, folly and ingratitude to our kind God, who waits that he may be gracious to us, and who will not withhold our desires, when these are not contrary to his glory, the good of his people, and our own comfort and happiness.

(h) Augustini
supra citat.

(i) *Ibid.*

(k) Viz both
to this and
that which
followeth
chap. 2.

CHAP. II.

When, and whose prayer will the Lord not hear nor answer.

WE will, 1. speak of this question as it concerneth the Saints; 2. as it concerneth the wicked.

Sect. I.

When will the Lord not hear his children and servants? and what are those sins that will obstruct and hinder the success of their prayers.

Psal. 66. 18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

WE may speak of the Saints prayers, either for privat and personal mercies, or for publick mercies to the Church and incorporation of believers; but as to the present case we need not insist on this distinction, but in reference to both sort of prayers, we may generally answer with the Psalmist, *Psa. 66. 18.* if we regard iniquity in our heart, the Lord will not accept or answer any of our prayers, either for our selves or others. See *Part. 2. Chap. 1.* But it may be askt, what are those sins which in a special manner do obstruct and hinder the success of our prayers? *Ans.* Albeit we condemn the stoical dream concerning the equality of sins, it being evident from the Word of truth and sound reason, that there is a great difference between sins and sins, some being much more hainous and grievous then others, both in respect of the act, object, manner of performance, and many aggravating circumstances; and thus those sins that are most grievous, hell-like, and conscience-wasting, must especially provoke the Lord, and mainly obstruct the acceptance and audience of prayer; yet, I know no sin that doth not deserve, and may not procure this sad judgement.

Judge me nt. But we would here take notice of the Gospel-
condescension to the weakness and infirmity of the Saints ;
for, though the Law still abideth in force, not only as a rule,
and as to its *direction*, but also as a command, and in refer-
ence to its *obligation*, so that the least breach of the law
doth no less now, then while man continued in innocency,
and was able perfectly to fulfill and obey it, deserve the
curse, and make us liable to the wrath of God, *Gal. 3. 10.*
yet as to the acceptance of the person and performances there
is a sweet mitigation in the new covenant, that covenant of
grace made with sinners in a Mediator, and the tenor of the
Gospel runneth thus, *If thou shouldst mark iniquities, O*
Lord, who shall stand? but there is forgiveness with thee,
that thou mayst be feared, Psa. 130. 3, 4. When we have
respect to all the commandments (though we do not exactly
fulfill them) *We shall not be ashamed, Psal. 119. 6.* When
in sincerity we apply our selves to obey God in all things,
and fulfill his will, our kind Master will pardon and pass over
our infirmities ; what the Apostle saith concerning our par-
ticular duty, *viz. giving of almes*, upon the same ground
will hold in every case, and may be lookt upon as a general
rule whereby we may judge concerning the acceptance of all
our duties and service. *viz. When there is a willing mind,*
and a performance out of that which we have (or according
to our power and ability) *it is accepted according to what a*
man hath, and not according to that a man hath not, 2 Cor.
8. 11, 12. The Lord doth not exact impossibilities of his
(a) people, he will not deal with them in justice, but having
accepted a ransom and satisfaction from their Cautioner,
and being through him reconciled with them, he will as a
loving Father accept their honest endeavours, pity their
weakness, and pardon and cover their infirmities : and thus
sins of weakness, humane frailty and daily incurision, will
not marre, ner hinder the acceptance and success of our
prayers ; but sins of wilfulness and stubbornness, and of con-
tinued and countenanced laziness and negligence, will be as a
thick (b) cloud through which our prayers will not be able
to pierce ; such sins have a voice, and they will out-cry our
prayers,

(a) The wick-
ed who are yet
under the co-
venant of
works, though
they be not yet
solvendo, as
having
through their
own faults
spent that stock
wherewith
their master
intrusted
them, yet are
still liable to
the law, and
are obliged to
answer accord-
ing to their
intromission.

(b) Lamenting
3. 44.

(c) Mr. Gee
treat. of pray-
er and divine
providence,
chap. 4. sect. 5.

prayers, and in stead of the *desired mercy*, will bring down the *deserved judgment*; when we sin willingly, deliberately, and presumptuously, when sin lodgeth in the heart, and is welcomed, or (as the Psalmist speaketh) is regarded there, the Lord will not hear our prayers; whatever the sin be whether in it self greater, or less (though there be no little sin, every sin being committed against the great God) it may provoke the Lord to hide himself from our prayers; the Scriptures hold out many instances, and brand a multitude of sins with this wofull effect, which are at some length set down by Mr. Gee in the fore-mentioned (c) Treatise lately and seasonably published, to give some clearing to this material and grave case concerning prayer-obstruction. And since its certain, 1. that every sin regarded in the heart, deserveth, and may procure this sad stroke; and since, 2. its as uncertain what is the particular sin, which now and then doth provoke the Lord to hide his face; neither see I any reason why we should as to the procuring and meritorious cause, put a difference between this and other judgments; and therefore the best resolution of this quære, (as it relateth to those personal prayers put up for our selves, though Mr. Gee especially propoundeth the case as relating to publick prayers, put up for the Church and people of God) must be brought from within; let us then examine our own hearts and wayes impartially, and seek light from heaven, and thus we may discover and find out the accursed thing, *for what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?* 1 Cor. 2. 11. And not only is this the best course for finding out the ground of the Lords controversie against every man in particular, but also for knowing and removing the cause why he contendeth with a Church or Nation; for albeit there may be publick, common and scandalous sins, which should be publickly acknowledged and repented of, yet that is not sufficient, but every one must descend to his own heart, and ponder his own wayes, and forsake the evil of his doings: and here there will be found a great variety, and almost as many different causes as persons; yea, and sometimes it may fall out, that the sole ground of the present controversie

controversie against a people, may be some secret gross sin committed by one or some few among them, as *Josh. 7. 11. 12.* And albeit then *Joshua* and the Elders of *Israel* could not tell why the Lords anger was kindled against that people, yet *Achan* might easily have found out the cause, he knew that he had taken, and where he had laid the Babylonish garment, and wedge of gold.

But though we need not come to particulars, yet in the general it would be observed, that prayer-obstruction may be procured either by sin *in praying*, or *in him who prayeth*; as for the, 1. *viz.* sins in, or about prayer it self, let us reflect on the qualifications and requisits of prayer held forth, *Part 2.* and from thence judge of the defects of prayer; and thus it will appear, that those prayers do carry in their bosom an evidence and witness against themselves, and a counter-pleader, in which, or with which is, 1. pride and self-worth; 2. hypocrisie and unsoundness; 3. formality and lip-devotion; 4. anger, malice and envy; 5. unbelief and distrust; 6. base, carnal and selfish ends, &c.

2. As for the other rank of sins, which have not such a dependence upon, nor connexion with prayer, and yet may hinder and obstruct its acceptance and success; these are of such a general latitude and extent, that we know no sin that needs be excluded and excepted; and so we need name none; only let us especially guard against such sins as are most gross, crying, conscience-wasting and defiling, which have most of the will, and of deliberation in them, and in which is engraven the deepest impression of ingratitude and rebellion; and where such sins are given way to, there must either be a total abstinence and cessation from prayer, or else but a superficial, dead and formal way of performance; an impatient bold sinner, dare not, cannot pray importunately, and in faith; and thus the prayers of secure sinners must be naught, and many wayes defective; so that this sort of sins, doth bring a long, and must be accompanied with the former; a guilty supplicant will not pray to purpose, but supposing his prayer were regular, yet his sins would out-cry his prayers; while *David* (though an eminent Saint) was praying,

(d)

verba iniqui-
tatum. Ar,
Mon.

praying, he heard a voyce crying, and pleading against him; hence he complaineth, *Psal.* 95. 3. *that iniquities* (or as it is in the Hebrew) *the* (d) *words of iniquity prevailed against him.* We will not now enquire whether he complaineth of his own personal sins, or the sins of them for whom he prayed? it being evident, that here he regretteth the prevalency of sin against his prayers, and that he heard its voyce and cry. You will say, it could not be the voyce of *Dauids* own sins which he heard, he not being then guilty of any such sin as could obstruct an answer to his prayers, wherefore he had not repented and humbled himself, and whereof he had not obtained a pardon; and a pardoned sin is as no sin. *Ans.* Albeit a pardoned sin cannot hinder the acceptance of our prayers, yea, nor their answer and success, yet it may hinder their acceptance, in reference to such a particular temporal mercy as is desired; and repentance sometimes cannot (though it be a promising and necessary mean) remove or hold off temporal rods (though it will prevent the evil and hurt that might thereby redound, for then the sting and curse will be taken out of the rod, and it will be turned into a blessing, and the Lord thereby will do us good) *Deut.* 3. 26. 2 *Sam.* 12. 13, 14. 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. 13. Nay, the Lord may justly punish *Israel* for the sins of penitent and glorified *Manasseh*, many years after his death, *Jerem.* 15. 4. But yet neither the sins of others nor our own sins after they are pardoned, can hinder *the* (e) *effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous from availing much*; such a prayer cannot want an (f) answer, nor prove unsuccessfull; whatever be the Lords dispensations towards such an one in respect of his outward and temporal state, (and yet if there be any mean for obtaining outward prosperity and success, this is it; yea, it will and must prevail for that end, if that be for such a one his spiritual and eternal happiness.) But sin not laid to heart, will hide God's face from his people, that he will *not hear them when they cry*, *Isa.* 59. 2. If we hearken not to God's voyce, he will not hearken to ours; if we obey not his commandments, he will not fulfill our desires: The *promise of audience*, hath the condition of *obedi-*

(e) *Jam.* 5.
1. 16.(f) See *Cha.*
3. *Sect.* 1, 2.

audience

diſpenſe annexed unto it, *ye ſhall ask what ye will, and it ſhall be done unto you,* (ſaith our bleſſed Lord) but upon this condition, *that ye abide in me, and my words abide in you,* Joh. 15. 7. And is there not a fitneſs and decency in ſuch a diſpenſation, and a ſuteable proportion between ſuch a fin and it's puniſhment? which the Lord holds forth to be obſerved by us, *Zeck. 7. 13. Therefore it is come to paſſe, that as he cryed, and they would not hear; ſo they cryed, and I would not hear, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* See alſo, *Prov. 1. 28. Ifa. 1. 15. Jer. 11. 11. &c.* Thus the Lord doth juſtly requite us; and his dealing with us runs parallel, and keeps a fit proportion with ours towards him; and who will think, that the Prince ſhould answer the traytors ſupplication, ſo long as he continueth in his rebellion and diſobedience?

SECT. II.

Who are they, whoſe prayers the Lord will never bear nor answer? By what marks and characters may ſuch be known? With a word of direction to them who fear, leſt their names be written in that black roll.

Prov. 1. 28, &c. Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they ſhall ſeck me early, but ſhall not find me: for that they, &c.

Albeit the Lord cannot be ſaid to hear the prayers of any unregenerat perſon, by virtue of a Covenant pleaded in the Mediator, (ſuch not being as yet in Chriſt, nor brought under the Covenant) Yet, the Lord in mercy and free grace, and of his abſolute ſovereignty, doth ſome-times ſo far accept the endeavours and prayers of natural men, which from ſenſe of ſin and a deſire (though quickened by a common operation of the Spirit, yet natural) of pardon, that he giveth the deſired mercy; for, he having appointed prayer to be a ſpecial mean of regeneration, he will thus bleſs his own Ordinance with ſucceſs, albeit it be not ſo and

so qualified ; as we shew at some length , *Part I. Chap. 5.* But, the question now is , when wicked men come to such a state, that prayer will be no more a mean to do them good? when they may be said to have lost the season and opportunity of audience, and to have let slip the day of grace and acceptable time? and that they may, yea and that many indeed do, come to such a state, may be made appear from several Scriptures, as *Prov. 1. 24. 28. Psa. 18. 41. Micah 3. 4. Isa. 1. 15. Jer. 14. 12. Jer. 11. 11. Ezek. 8. 18. Job 27. 9. &c.* Hence the exhortation, *To seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near, Isa. 55. 6.* and it is said of the godly, that they will call upon the Lord *in a time when he may be found, Ps. 3. 6.* and thus the Sun may be said to set upon some, before their day come to an end, though they have the ordinances of life and the means of grace constituted with them, and in this respect, (and as to us who know not the Lords purpose and secrets) the day of grace may be said not to be yet past to such, yet there may be a judicial stroke upon many hearts, and the time in which the Lord might be found may be past and gone as to them. But we will not now meddle with that high point of *induration*, but shall confine our selves within the bounds of the present enquiry ; and shall, 1. offer some marks and characters, whereby such may be known who have let this acceptable time pass ; and, 2. we shall propound some few particulars for clearing difficulties that may here occur ; with a word of direction to such as fear lest this may be their case.

As to the first, though the Scriptures do not hold forth any general and infallible rules, whereby we may here judge and pass a peremptory sentence ; yet, both Scripture and experience do point out several grounds of fear : and from thence we shall briefly offer some few signes and characters, whereby we may more then probably guess and conjecture whose names are written in this black roll. And, O how terrible and awaking may such a point be? and with what amazement should secure sinners (were they not judicially plagued and deserted) hear such a discovery? which is not
only,

only of such as are going and on the way to hell, (this were easily known, if men would hearken to the word of Truth and impartially judge themselves; all they who are under the reign and dominion of any sin, and thus have another master then the Lord, must be the servants of sin and of hell, Rom. 6. 16.) But the question is, who are they who must perish in that way, and who, in all probability, (yea, unless by a miracle of mercy they be reclaimed) will never turn nor seek the Lord with the whole heart, and therefore will never meet with audience and acceptance, though they should call upon him? And (b) because the final rejection of their persons and prayers are so inseparably and necessarily conjoined, we may in this discovery indifferently speak of either of these two.

(b) In the following characters, we speak of the case of rejection in the general, because the Scripture most frequently speaks of that; and because it includes, with the rejection of persons, the rejection of their prayers also.

(c) 1 Tim. 4. 2.

(d) Heb. 4. 12.

1. Then, all those may fear lest this be their case, who have lived under a powerfull and searching ministry, and yet are so far from bringing forth fruit, that they are still on the declining hand; and so far from being renewed and converted, that they grow worse and worse, and their heart becometh harder and more incorrigible, till at length they are become preaching-proof, and will not be afraid of the terrors of the Almighty: perhaps at first they had some tenderness and heart-meltings under Ordinances, but now their (c) conscience is seared as with a hot iron; So that the quick and powerfull (d) Word of God, which is sharper then any two-edged sword, cannot draw blood nor pierce them, and he that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall be destroyed, and that without remedy, Prov. 29. 1. The Lords Word cannot return void, Isa. 55. 11. and therefore, when it is not the favour of life, it will become the favour of death, 2 Cor. 2. 16. Hence is that judicial wo denounced against Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, for despising and not profiting under Christs ministry; Mat. 11. 21. 23. and thus that sad judgment, foretold by the Prophet, Isa. 6. 9. was accordingly inflicted upon the Jews, Joh. 12. 36, 37, 38. 40. And upon the same ground also doth our blessed Lord apply this prophecy to them, Mat. 13. 14, 15. where we may still observe, that impenitency and hardness of heart, under a

powerfull ministry, are held forth as a mark and evidence of a judicial stroke and final desertion; especially where the Ordinances have been continued for a considerable time, and many warnings have been despised, O Hierusalem, Hierusalem, how often would I have gathered you, but you would not? therefore, &c. Mat. 23. 37, 38, 39. When the Israelites had grieved him forty years, he swore they should not enter into his rest, Heb. 3. 17, 18.

2. Hypocritical Professors, who have a form and name of godliness, but deny and hate the power of it, will hardly escape the damnation of hell, Mat. 23. 29-33. Such think to deceive both God and man, and to hide themselves under a vizard, and the Lord, in his righteous judgment, makes that cloak and cover a wofull snare to them; their resting on a name that they live, keeps them off from laying hold on eternal life: how rarely and hardly are such convinced and converted, Publicans and harlots go into the Kingdom of God before them, Mat. 21. 31. but they are, as it were, Proprietors and Land-lords in hell. Hence that place is described by their interest in it, Mat. 24. 51. and comparing this place with Mat. 25. 41. we will find, that their interest there is like the devils; and is it any wonder then, that our meek Saviour denounce wo upon wo against Scribes and Pharisees for their hypocrisy? Mat. 23.

3. Old gray-haired sinners, who for a long time have lived in gross and scandalous sins, may fear lest this sad judgment hath over-taken them; custom in sin fortifieth the devils garrison in the heart, and every new sin puts on a new bar on the door to hold Christ out; we are bad enough by nature, and too far estranged and (e) alienated from the life of God, but (f) custom is, as it were, another nature, not for quality, but by way of addition to the former mass of corruption, making the distance between us and the holy one greater and greater, till at length the conscience (whose office is to accuse for sin, and which now and then, if it be not thus obstructed, will do its duty, Rom. 2. 15.) be past feeling, and the sinner be given over to work all uncleanness and wickedness with greediness, Eph. 4. 19. As the high-way, by often tread-

(e) Ephes. 4.

18,

(f) Custom
do est altera
natura,

ing.

ding on it becometh hard like a stone, and a work-mans hand by constant labour becometh insensible, So the sinners heart by suffering Sathan for a long time to tread upon it, and by frequency and diligence at his work becometh hard as an Adamant, and incorrigible; how seldom, and with what difficulty (or shall I say, how miraculously) do such as have been Sathans old servants change their master? as if such (like those servants; *Exod.* 21. 6.) had suffered their ear to be bored through with an aul, that they might serve their master for ever; what a wonder is it to see an old drunkard, swearer, covetous man, &c. repent and turn? As we read of a measure of sin set to publick and outward judgments, *Gen.* 15. 16. So that when the cup of iniquity is full, a cup of wrath and astonishment must be put in the hand; so the Lord hath appointed such a measure of sin, for spiritual and personal judgment; and what knowest thou, O man, if thou continue but one day longer in impenitence, adding but some few more to the former, but thy cup may be full, and then the Lord will (g) strive no more with thee, but will give thee up unto thine own hearts lust, and to walk in thine own counsels; as he did them, *Psa.* 81. 12. But some will haply say; well! I must then have many years before my hand, before it be thus with me; for I am but a young man. *Ans.* As the number and measure of iniquities is not the same in respect of all, So neither the measure of time; it may be the Lord will allow thee but three years; *these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none, cut it down*, *Luk.* 13. 7. It may be the acceptable time is, (as it is called, *Isa.* 61. 2.) but one year; perhaps but one day, *Heb.* 4. 7. nay, perhaps but for a short (h) part of a day, *Mark.* 6. 11. And thus young men cannot promise to themselves one dayes security from this sad stroke; and old sinners have reason to fear least already they have let the acceptable time pass.

(h) *Gen.* 6. 3.

(h) *In what place or house*
sever the
Apostles en-
tered, though
they abode not
there for the
space of an
hour they were
commanded to
shake of the
dust under
their feet for a
testimony
against
despi-
ser; whole
case
then became
perat-

4. Those who have been intrusted with many talents; men of great parts, wisdom, learning, honour, wealth, &c. who have not only hid those, and not improven them to the honour of the Giver, but (which is worse) made them

weapons de]

weapons to war against him, may fear the worst of themselves, and least what is said of riches, *Eccles.* 5. 13. be verified in all their mercies, *viz.* that they are given and continued with them for their hurt: Thus *Julian* the Apostat received many talents, but he improved them ill, and imployed his wisdom, learning and imperial power against the Gospel which once he professed, and for rooting out the Christian religion out of his empire, and that was an evidence that God had rejected him, and given him up to the lusts of his own heart: *Not many mighty, not many wise, not many noble, &c.* *I Cor.* 1. 26. Wisdom, power and nobility being improven a right, would prove no impediment, but these being (as too ordinarily they are) abused, the Lord quickly giveth such ungrate men over, and passeth a sentence against them; hence, *not many, &c.* *Saul, Jeroboam, Jehu, Herod, Korah, Dathan & Abiram*, the Scribes and Pharisees are sad instances of Gods displeasure against their ingratitude who have received much, or whom he hath brought near to himself.

5. Such as often resist the Spirit of God, and the checks of conscience, may fear least the Lord strive no more with them; the Jews were famous for this, as *Stephen* (the first Martyr for the Christian faith) testified to their face, *Act.* 7. 51. and accordingly our blessed Lord once and again applieth to them that sad threatening, *Isa.* 6. 9, 10. *as Mat.* 13, 14. *Job.* 12. 40. and the Apostle, *Act.* 28. 26. *Rom.* 11. 8. Albeit the inward motions of the Spirit usually accompany the outward preaching of the Word, yet in one and the same ordinance these may be more powerfull and frequent to one then to others; and the guiltiness of such a one in resisting and quenching the Spirit, must accordingly be the greater: It may be thou hast not been an hearer of the Gospel so long as others, nor lived under such a powerfull ministry, and yet haply thou hast had mo and stronger heavenly impressions, perswasions and convictions; (for the (i) wind bloweth where it listeth) which if thou hast choaked, till at length the Spirit hath withdrawn, thou mayst fear least he never return: but if the Lord not only thus by the *inward motions* of his Spirit, but also by the *outward dispensations*

(k) *Joh.* 3. 8.

of providence hath drawn and allured thee, if the Lord hath given thee many mercies, and these haply not ordinary, but great, or often, or long continued; and frequently delivered thee from thy fears, &c. and thus by some one or other circumstance in a speciall manner hath called upon thee, and thou hast not hearkned to that voyce; or if by several rods, or some sharp or long continued affliction he hath warned thee, and thou hast not heard what (k) the rod (l) said, nor known who hath appointed it, thou mayst fear least thy (l) heart be made fat, thine ears heavy, and that thine eyes be now shut, that thou mayst not see with thine eyes, nor hear with thine ears, nor understand with thine heart, that thou mightest be converted and healed.

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kers of iniquity, *Luk. 13. 27.*

8. Hereticks, both speculative and practical, are in a most dangerous condition: 1. *Speculative*, such as maintain and spread poysonable doctrine, for the subverting of those who hear and converse with them, are held forth in the Scriptures with a black mark on their fore-head, that we may beware of them, and may abominat their way, *Tis. 3. 10, 11.*, *2 Thes. 2. 10, 11.* where, first, such are said to be (*/*) *subverted*, or quite over-turned, and fallen without hope of recovery: Secondly, they are to be reputed as self-condemned, and having a judge within themselves, who hath given out sentence against them: Thirdly, such must not be tolerated, but if they continue obstinate, (and who among them will ever turn?) after the first and second admonition, should be rejected and excommunicated: Fourthly, we have the reason why the Lord suffers such thus to fall, and why he gives them up to such errors, not because they are pious, learned and ingenuous men (as their followers would make us believe, and under which mask deceivers usually do cover their wares, and by this pretence often prevail with simple ignorant people) but because he purposeth to destroy them, and never shew mercy upon them. And its observable, that this is not only said of Antichrist (that great impostor and deceiver) and of his emissaries (those famous seducers and deceivers of the greatest part of the world where the name of Christ is professed) but of all these who being seduced, receive and embrace damnable errors from whatsoever hand; and *because they received not the love of the truth* while it shined before their eyes, *therefore did the Lord send them strong delusions, and suffered them to believe a lye, that they all might be damned,* *2 Thes. 2. 10. 11, 12.* And thus the Apostle, *2 Pet. 2. 1.* tells us, that as hereticks and false teachers *bring upon themselves swift destruction*, So their way and doctrine, their errors and heresies are *damnable*, of their own nature, and therefore to all; not only bringing damnation to the first hands, to the merchants and sellers; but also to the buyers and possessors, and to all who welcom and embrace them. With what indignation

dignation then should we hear some plead that hereticks should be tolerated, and get liberty to spread their poysonable doctrine, as being a simple innocent matter, an error only in the mind, while the life and conscience may be pure and holy? But though, 1. we deny not, that truth may go under the notion of error, as in the Roman Church, where orthodox professors are accounted hereticks; and, 2. though we do not think every error to be inconsistent with true holiness; yet, 3. it seemeth strange to call a man a *holy heretick*, or that any should have the face to plead that such should be suffered to ensnare and deceive, and so ruine and destroy the souls of simple people; for, though they embrace damnable errors under the notion of truth and new light; yet that will not excuse them, but by so doing they bring to themselves swift destruction, their judgment lieth not, and their damnation slumbereth not; they have believed and received a lye, that they might be damned.

But you will say, who among us are guilty of this sin?

Ans. We have reason to praise God for with-holding the temptation, but no reason to boast of our own strength and steadfastness; for, had not the Lord preserved (t) knowledge and truth in our teachers lips, how easily might seducers have prevailed with many of us? Ships that want ballast, must be tossed to and fro with every wind, such as have no more but a name and profession, no change in the heart, no grace nor ballast within, nor the anchor of hope to keep them from reeling; may easily be subverted with the least blast of a temptation; and yet there may be a morall, pagan and and selfish steadfastness in a way and course in which a man is once engaged, without any knowledge, or fear of God; nay, that may also flow from a damnable indifferency and neutrality, because too many, (u) Gallio-like, care for none of those things that concern the glory of God, they will not be at the pains to try and examine what is right or wrong in points of religion, but will live and dye in the religion of their fore-fathers, and in which they themselves were born and brought up; and thus, if such had been born

(t) Mal. 2.7.

(u) A&C. 18.
17.

under popery, or Mahumetisme; they would have been as zealous for either of these, as now they are for the truth: And may it not seem strange, that neutrality should make a man a zealot? (if he deserve that name who hath no love, care nor diligence) and is it not as strange that negligence should prove an occasion of steadfastness? But yet since such Gallio's have no love to matters of soul-concernment, and no desire to be troubled in hearing or learning any thing of that nature from whatsoever hand; therefore as they do not much regard the preachers of righteousness, So neither will they readily hearken to false teachers, and thus are not in great hazard to be seduced. What then? though thou be not an *heretick*, yet thou mayst be an *athrist*, and which of the twain is worst? though thou art not a *speculative*, yet thou mayst be a *practical* heretick, though thou never wast tainted with any speculative error in the fundamentals of our Christian *faith*, yet thou mayst be poisoned with practical errors in the vitals of our Christian *life*; albeit thou be sound and orthodox in points that are to be believed, yet thou mayst be a gross heretick as to the rule of our practice, and the right way to happiness.

1. Practical
heresie,

And thus we come to the second branch of this character, in which too many among us are concerned; and among many practical heresies which might be named, we shall only mention two or three, which as they are near in kind, and seldom separated, So are most dangerous and pernicious, having from time to time sent so many souls to hell where the Gospel is purely preach'd, and the first of those heresies doth set up a new and anti-scriptural way to heaven, a broad and easie way, in which men may walk and take along their lovers and idols with them, there is room enough in that way, they may joyn hands and walk in it together: And such as are tainted with this heresie (and ah! who are they who do not embrace it?) do esteem the narrow way a mystery and paradox, which precise and conceity people do try up, because it is singular, and would make others believe that they walk in it, that they might be admired, but as for themselves, they will not be so rigid and unreasonable, they

know

know that godliness imports a change, and that they must be new creatures; and do something that they may come to heaven; and the greatest length that the most will go, is to abstain from some scandalous & gross pollutions, and be ready to cry out against such sins with the best; and they will go to the Church, and countenance publick ordinances, and perhaps they will follow some form of family-worship, yea, and of private devotion, they will say (and yet their hearts be silent) their prayers every day, and who can espie any fault in them? and what needs more? they will *not be righteous over much*; for *why should they destroy themselves?* Eccles. 7. 16. and thus they stint themselves, and such a length they will come, but not one step further, though the Lord by his word and works, and by his messengers (who come to them in his name) warn them of their danger and desperat folly; they will not be so cruel as to wrestle and fight with their bosom friends, nor so violent as to take the kingdom of heaven by force, nor will they be at the pains to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, to run as in a race for the prize that is set before them, and to sweat at their duty; and they know not what use the affections have in Gods service, they have heard of such a thing as mortification, self-denial, zeal, tenderness, &c. but they look upon these as empty notions, and which do rather hurt then profit those who exercise themselves in them. And thus those men become secure, and think it needless to be at any more pains to make sure their calling and election; what needs more? they have peace; but can it be otherwise, since the strong man is kept within, and therefore he will not assault him? (Sathan is not so foolish as to awaken those who are securely sleeping in his bosom) and they will not be so cruel as to rouse themselves out of that sweet dream, and cast themselves upon the rack; nay, they have closed the doors and windows, that no warning or threatening counsel or invitation may enter in, and have stoppt their ears that they may not be molested with the cries of Gods faithfull messengers; who must (say they) have liberty to speak what they will, but we know what we should do, and therefore let

let them speak on ; so that unless the omnipotent arm of the Almighty by a sort of miracle pull them out of that snare into which they are so far plunged, they must perish without remedy : If Ministers could preach down this damnable error, and once convince people of this strong delusion, what a change and reformation in all ranks of people might be seen ? lawyers would not have so many clients, nor Physicians so many Patients coming to their doors to ask their advice & counsel, as ministers would have mourners coming with tears in their eyes, confessing their folly, and enquiring after the good old way, the narrow and safe way in which they must walk to Zion ; and saying (with the trembling Jaylor, *Act. 16. 30.*) *Sirs, what must we do to be saved ?* We may not stay to confute this desperat and soul-destroying delusion, but as to that place, *Ecc. 7.* we grant that there may be a *nimium*, and too much in externals, and that Papists, Pharisees and Formalists of whatsoever stamp or profession, may add unto the rule, and when they have supererogated and vexed themselves in their voluntary acts of worship and devotion, have this question put to them, *but who required these things at your hand ?* yea, and, 2. there may be an indiscreet and unwarrantable rigidity and severity as to things lawfull and commanded, which may be very grievous to our selves, and troublesom to others ; but while we walk by the rule, both as to the matter and manner of performance, there is no hazard of excess ; especially as to the inward acts of love, knowledge, estimation, desire, hope, dependence and delight in God, to which these secure formalists are so great strangers, *who (x) having a form of godliness deny the power thereof*, resting upon some few outward and lifeless performances : to whom we will now say no more, but in the general warn them, that he who thinks himself holy enough, is yet a stranger to true holiness, *Phil. 3. 12. 2 Pet. 3. 18. &c.*

a Practical
heresie.

The second practical heresie is the ground and foundation of the former, and it is a fond opinion and conceit, that the grace, mercy and goodness of God discovered in the Gospel, doth grant a toleration to sin, and that the cove-

nant

nant of grace doth give a dispensation from the law, and yield a great deal of liberty; so that it is needless now to aim at perfection, men must repent and believe, and so (say they) we do; but we cannot away with the acuracy and strictness of some puritans, *We are not now (y) under the law but under grace*; we know that God is mercifull, and Christ hath died for sinners, and let ministers say what they please, we will trust in God, and in our dear Saviour, and hope to speed as well as the precisest puritan. (y) Rom. 6. 14.

We spoke of the obligation of the law, *Sett. 1.* and shall now only show that this wofull errour is a monster of many heads: for, 1. it denieth Gods *justice*, and saith, that the righteous Lord will acquit and clear the guilty; contrary to his name whereby he proclaimed himself, *Exod. 34. 7.* And its observable, that there his mercy hath the first place, and is amplified by several expressions, as if that were the great and main property whereby the holy one would be described, yet by way of anticipation, and to prevent this delusion, this caveat is added, *that (yet for as mercifull as he is) he will by no means clear the guilty*; thus also after the prophet *Nabum* had asserted the Lords kindness and forbearance, he tells secure sinners that this is nothing to them, they will never taste of his goodness; for, saith he, though *the Lord be slow to anger, yet he will not at all acquit the Wicked.* But they, notwithstanding all his goodness, mercy and forbearance, shall perish in their iniquities, and *the reward of their hands shall be given unto them*, Nah. 1. 3. Isa. 3. 11.

2. It denieth Gods *holiness*, and *that (z) he is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity*; and thus it must have been to no purpose for the Apostle to exhort us to holiness, because we have to do with a holy Lord, 1 *Pet. 1. 15, 16.* albeit the Lord himself once and again press this motive, as, *Lev. 11. 44. Lev. 19. 2. Lev. 20. 7. &c.* (z) Habak. 1. 13.

3. It denieth the Lords *truth* and fidelity in fulfilling his threatnings, as if these were set down in the Scriptures only to terrifie fools or children; but these men know God to be more

more mercifull then to damn his own creatures and honest servants ; and the Apostle *John* (think they) was too rash and uncharitable in saying, that *he who committeth sin is of the devil, and that he who is born of God, doth not, yea, cannot sin, but purifieth himself as he is pure*, 1 Joh. 3. 8, 9. 3. And St. *James* was too strict and precise a puritan, while he affirmeth, that *though a man should keep the whole law, yet if he offend in one point, he is guilty of all*, Jam. 2. 10.

4. It separateth Christs offices, denying him to be a King and Prophet, for though those men would close with him as a Priest, and lay hold on that sacrifice he once offered for sin, as a perfect medicine to cure all their diseases, yet they (a) *will not have him as a King to reign over them*, nor as a Prophet to reveal the safe and narrow way to salvation : And thus by separating Christs offices, they are separated from him ; and while they quit two parts, they are deprived of the third.

3. Practical
heresie,

(b) Like the
French King
who would
swear, and
then kiss his
crucifix, and
then swear
again, &c.

The third practical heresie is embraced by too many infatuated people, who think that they may *love God and serve the devil*, that they may give God their *hearts*, while they give the devil their *hands*, and that they may *believe in Christ*, though they keep not his commandments : And (such will say) though we cannot be so strict and precise as some folk, yet none love God more ; and though we often sin against him, yet we daily (b) *repent, and ask Gods mercy*, we are sorry for all our sins, and would fain serve God better, but we cannot help it ; and we are sure to keep our hearts for God, and we hope he will accept our good meaning, and the will for the deed, and will never be so cruel as to damn so many well meaning folk, who mind him no ill, but love him with all their heart, though they cannot do all they should, &c. Oh ! that our eyes were a fountain of tears, that we might weep and lament the mad security, and desperat folly of those wretches ! what ! is it not one of the most ridiculous paradoxes, to *mean well*, and *do ill* ? such a gloss (like that of *Orleans*) manifestly destroys the text ; our hearts and intentions are a riddle and mystery,

not

not only to others, but also to our selves; and our actions and doings are the best commentary on that obscure text; hence while the Prophet complained of the hearts deceitfulness and desperat wickedness, which could be known and searcht out by none but the Lord, yet acknowledgeth this commentary, *Jer.* 17. 9, 10. as if he had said [do not deceive your selves with your good meaning, and the honesty of your hearts, for they are exceeding deceitfull; but remember this, the Lord will render to every man according to his wayes and doings] ah I who is able to bewail this desperat deceit? such as thus mistake the way, will miss the place they aim at; such as think they mean well, and do ill, while they think they are on the way to heaven, are going post to hell; hence (c) an ancient Doctor said well [Such (saith he) as can give God their heart, believe, love and fear him, and yet sin against him (that is, keep their chastity, and yet violate matrimony) shall in mercy be sent to hell, and with such a supposed pardon of their sins as they had faith and love to God; as their sins made no breach upon their love to him, So neither shall their punishment make a breach upon his mercy towards them.] Ah fool! must not our faith be evidenced by our works (*Jam.* 2. 18, 20, &c.) and our love by our obedience and keeping of his commandments? *Iob.* 14. 15, 21. *Iob.* 15. 14. 1 *Iob.* 2. 5. &c. O! if while thou layest hold on Gods mercy and Christs death with thy unclean hands, thou wouldst remember, that *without holiness none shall see the Lord* (except as a judge coming to take vengeance on them) *Heb.* 12. 14. and that *Christ will become the author of eternal salvation unto such only* (though to all those) *as obey him*, *Heb.* 5. 9.

(c) *Sed aiunt quidam Deum satis habere si corde & animo suspiciatur. licet actu minus fiat: itaque si salvo metu & fide peccare, hoc est (salva castitate) matrimonia violare, (salva pietate) parenti venerum temperare, sic ergo. & ipsi (salva venia in gebennam) derudentur, dum (salvo metu) peccant, Terciol. de penis, cap. 5.*

We might add to these, several other damnable delusions, as so many branches coming from the former cursed root, viz. the abuse of Gods mercy, by making that which is the only rock of safety (to which the ship-broken passenger should run for his life) a stone of ruine and destruction, against which they dash their brains; as if a man were so foolish, as to imagine a bridge to be broader then it is, and in this delusion step aside the bridge would not keep him

Even

from

(d) Peccare
 & de Dei
 creatoris cle-
 mentia prae-
 mere pelago
 justitiae ejus
 exponit,
 Greg. loc.
 prius cit.

from drowning; so while deluded sinners extend the mercy of God beyond the bounds he hath set in his Word, and thus in their presumption step aside to their own crooked wayes, the mercy of God will not keep them from falling head-long into the pit of destruction. *To continue in sin* (saith (d) Gregory) *and yet to presume of the mercy of God, is to cast our selves into the sea of his justice and displeasure.* The Lord ere it be long will vindicate his mercy from such a base abuse, to the everlasting confusion and astonishment of presumptuous sinners. But we may not insist, only (to our purpose) let such remember that this delusion is a black mark of a never-do-well, and therefore doth the Apostle abominat it with so much indignation; *shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?* God forbid Rom. 6. 1, 2. and then by several arguments sheweth that a child of God will not, cannot make such an inference: And the Apostle *Iude* speaking of some *Who were of old ordained to condemnation*, describeth them by this, *that they turned the grace of God into lasciviousness*, ver. 4. O! would you then escape damnation, beware least ye be bold to sin, because God is slow to anger; and least ye add to your iniquities, because the Lord is gracious and abundant in goodness; and that ye delay not your repentance, because he is long-suffering and patient. And if thou must needs tempt God, first take a tryal in thy body, or outward estate, before thou hazard thy immortal soul and everlasting portion; go and waste thy estate and provision, and see whether the mercy of God will keep thee from begging; and put thy finger in the fire, and try whether the mercy of God will keep thee from burning: but if thou wilt not trust the mercy of God, while thou slightest the means he hath appointed as to these inferiour ends, and yet wilt mispend this day of the Gospel, and slight the ordinances of life (which are thy portion and allowance, and the talents wherewith thou shouldest trade for eternity) and yet think it will be well with thee hereafter, if thou wilt cast thy soul into the fire of sin, and yet think to escape the burning and torments of hell, profess what thou wilt; it is not thy confidence in God, but thy negligence

gence and want of care for thy soul, that makes thee despise the means of grace and slight thy duty ; and thy body, estate and perishing life is thy idol, for which thou takest more thought then for thy soul and eternal happiness.

9. Earthly-minded, covetous worldlings, are lying under the serpents curse, (which hardly or never will be removed, *Mark* 10. 23.) *Gen.* 3. 14. First, they go upon their belly and cannot stand straight nor look up-ward ; their heart cleaveth to the earth, and they cannot (e) *set their affections* (e) *Colof.* 3. *on things above*, they only (f) *minde earthly things*, and (f) *Phil.* 3. 19. *spend all their (g) labour for the meat that perisheth.* 2. Dust is their portion and food, they slight the childrens bread, and undervalue the (h) *hidden manna*, and with the swine of (h) *Rev.* 2. 17. the world live upon the (i) husks : and yet those miserable (i) *Luk.* 15. wretches will not want fair pretences and plea's, [we must 16. (will such say) live and provide for our families ; the times are evil, and we know not what may fall out, and all we can purchase may be little enough : what ? should we be idle ? may we not follow our calling, and watch on our business ? &c.] But, thinkest thou (O worldling) this to be a sufficient plea for making the world thy idol, and for neglecting the one thing necessary ? Knowest thou not that *the love of money is the (k) root of all evil ?* 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. and (k) *See the tes-* that *he who will be rich*, (rather rich in wealth then in grace, *stimonies of* for himself rather then towards God, *Luke* 12. 21.) *fall into* *beasties, con-* *temptation, and a snare*, and into many foolish and hurtfull *cerning which* *lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition, and* *the Apostle,* *and apud Reusner.* *pierce them thorow with many sorrows,* v. 9 10. and is not (l) *imp.* *Christis verdict of such very terrible ? It is easier for a ca-* *claf.* 2. *symb.* *mel to go through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to* 36. *enter into the kingdom of God,* *Mat.* 19. 23, 24. Ah ! this devil of earthly-mindedness hath destroyed many thousand souls, it so filleth the heart, that there is no room left for the Word of God to enter in, but it choaketh the Word at the very entry, and makes it become unfruitfull, *Mat.* 13. 22. this was it that hindred that people from profiting under *Eze-* *kjels* ministry, *Ezek.* 33, (and this is the great obstru- *ctor* of the Gospel wherever it is preach'd) *They come unto*

thee, (saith the Lord to the Prophet) and sit before thee as my people, and with their mouth show much love, and they hear thy words, but they will not do nor obey them, for their hearts goeth after their covetousness, v. 31. Hence the Apostle must weep when he thinks on covetous wretches, Phil. 3. 18. but what aileth thee, O Paul, thus to bewail such wealthy, well-guiding and thriving men? Ah! saith the Apostle, whatever be their portion of the world, and whatever be the estimation of the wicked, (who will be ready to bless the covetous whom the Lord abhorreth, Ps. 10. 3.) yet, they are most despicable and miserable creatures; for *their glory is their (l) shame, and their end destruction*, v. 19. and as for their religion, profess what they will, they are the grossest idolaters, Eph. 5. 5. *their belly being their god*, Phil. 3. 19. Ah! ill and un-wise merchants, who sell heaven for earth, and your soul and the immortal crown for an empty and perishing trifle; how hath the world thus be-fooled and (m) bewitched you?

10. There is little hope of mockers of piety, haters of God and of his servants; and who are ready to revile and tear their faithfull monitors and reprovers; I joyn these, because usually they go hand in hand: for hatred of holiness, as it floweth from enmity against God, So it will beget enmity against his children and servants, and a cursed impatience and rage at their warnings and rebukes.

11. Then, as for haters of God, there be but few who will acknowledge themselves to be such; but let carnal men profess never so much love to God, yet (saith the Apostle) *the carnal mind* (and how few can purge themselves of that) *is enmity against God*, Rom. 8. 7. it so much hateth God, that it is, as it were, hatred and enmity in the *abstract*; and if it be brought to the infallible touch-stone of love, (to which the Scriptures so often appeal) viz. obedience to his commandments, and if we consider what conscience carnal-minded men make of their wayes, the hypocrisie of their profession and empty complements will easily appear; and many professors and titular Christians will be found to be in another rank, and so belong to that world of whom our blessed Lord

(l) Pronun-
ciat Apostolus
gloriam qua
nunc sunt in-
flati, ignomi-
nia mutatum
tri, Calv. in
loc.

(m) Gal. 3. 1.
quasi prae-
stigiis quibus-
dam demones
facti, Beza in
loc.

Quadam ve-
luti magna in-
cantatione,
Calvin in loc.
with force-
ries, Ham-
mond, ibid.

Lord testifieth, (and whether shall we believe his report or their vain lying words ?) that it hateth him, *Jobs* 15. 18. But, let such haters of God and of our Lord Jesus know, to their terror, that their names are written in the catalogue of those who are *given over to a reprobate mind*, *Rom.* 1. 30. 28. and though, for a time, visible judgments may be withheld, yet, ere it be long, *Gods right hand shall find out all those that hate him*, *Pf.* 27. 8.

2. From the former root must spring hatred of the godly and of godliness; as they who love him that beget, love them also that are begotten of him, *1 Job.* 5. 1. So on the contrary, such as hate the Father will not love the children; and therefore, haters of God must hate the godly, and upon this very account, because they bear his image in their heart, and express it in their life and conversation; and thus, as the bloody murderers at the massacre at *Paris*, not finding the famous and learned Martyr, *P. Ramus*, to shew their malice and hatred of him, pierced his picture, and himself too, (but they knew not that he was hid behind it) So the wicked, not being able to find and reach the Lord, they run at his Image where-ever they see it, and no thanks to them that God is not behind the Picture, for they would not spare nor hold their hands. Hence the persecution of the Saints may well, and by just interpretation, be called *Deicide*, and the Lord will one day reckon with oppressors of his people, for all the wrongs and injuries done to them, as if they had been immediately done to his holy majesty, according to that word, *Zech.* 2. 8. *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye*; and, *Act.* 9. 45. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* saith the head in glory, complaining of the oppression of his suffering members on earth.

Nay, but will some say, we were not worthy to live if we loved not God; but for these professors, they are a pack of hypocrites, conceit and troublesome people, and we cannot endure them. *Ans.* We deny not, 1. that difference of opinion may occasion very sharp and hot debates among the Saints themselves; and, 2. that the godly are more affected with, and displeased at, the sins and failings of brethren, and

(n) 1 Sam. 12.
14.

(o) Heb. 11.
7.

(p) Gen. 3.
15.

of such who have a name that they live, then at the transgressions of the wicked; because the miscarriages of the Saints do more dishonour God and wound the holy profession, and put a weapon in the hands of carnal men, and give them an (n) occasion to open their mouth and blaspheme; but, 3. that any godly man doth hate another or is grieved, because he is godly, is most false; but let the wicked pretend what they will, yet this is all their quarrel against the Saints; for if they would walk loosely, and run with the wicked to the same excess of riot, and not (o) condemn them by their holy conversation, they could love them as well as others, and delight as much in their society; but because the Saints dare not thus conform, therefore they hate and speak evil of them, 1 Pet. 4. 4. *Joh. 3. 19, 20. Ioh. 7. 7.* The old (p) enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, doth stir up the wicked against the Saints; and though they would cloak their hatred with some fair pretence, yet the Lord knoweth that such are acted by *Cains* principle, *who slew his brother, because his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous*, 1 Joh. 3. 12. And whereas such will say, that notwithstanding they love God, let them hearken to this Apostle, *ch. 4. 20. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he, &c.* and as to the state and condition of such a one, we have it described, *ch. 2. 11. and, ch. 3. 15. He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, (that he is running to eternal destruction) because that darkness hath blinded his eyes. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life.*

(q) It is observable, that so many branches of hatred are there named, and all of them held forth as so many evidences of a reprobate mind.

And we will find (q) maliciousness, hatred, envy, despight, &c. held forth as a character of men given over to a reprobate mind, *Rom. 1. 28, 29, 30, 31.*

As to the other two branches of this black mark, *viz.* mocking of piety and raging at a reproof, they need not be separated; for, as mockers of piety and of the Saints are the worst of sinners, so they are most obdured, and have fortified themselves against all arrows of reproof, and therefore will be ready to reverberate and send them back against the throwers;

throwers; *these swine will trample such pearls under their feet, and turn again and rent you,* saith our Lord to his disciples, *Mat. 7. 6.* these are the fools that despise and refuse instruction, and so despise their own soul, *Prov. 15. 5. 32.* these be the scorners that will not hear a warning or rebuke, *Prov. 13. 1.* and it were better to meet a Beare robbed of her whelps then such brutish fools in their folly, *Prov. 17. 12.* And thus we may see both their sin and their punishment; the Lord in his righteous judgment leaves and gives over mockers of piety, and so they become incorrigible, and cannot endure a reproof: mocking *Ishmaels* must be cast out, *Gen. 21. 9, 10.* such barking dogs may not enter the Kings palace, *Rev. 22. 15.* Surely the Lord scorneth the scorners, judgments are prepared for them, and stripes for their back, *Prov. 3. 34. Prov. 19. 29.* the scorner will be consumed, and all that watch for iniquity cut off, *Isa. 29. 10.* and though scoffers should call upon God in the day of their trouble, yet he would laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear comes, *Prov. 1. 22. 30, 26, 28.* Ah! remember the last and sad dictey against the ancient people of God, he waited long upon them; and though they were a stubborn and rebellious nation, yet he stirred not up all his wrath, *but sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending, because he had compassion on them; but when they mocked his messengers, his wrath arose against his people till there was no remedy,* 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16. And for such as hate and reproach their faithfull monitors, and will not turn at their rebuke, *there is (r) more hope of a (r) fool then of such obdurate wretches;* for he who thus hateth and despiseth reproof, *shall die and perish in his sins,* *Prov. 15. 10.* yea, *such as being often reprov'd, harden their neck, shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy,* *Prov. 29. 1.* and wo to him who layeth a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, *Isa. 29. 21.*

O ((i) ye stout hearted and far from righteousness, will ye yet maintain your former plea, and put (t) the evil day far from you? how dreadfull and terrible may this point be to you, if ye were not (u) past feeling, ye have (no doubt)

many

(f) Isa. 46. 12

(t) Amos 6. 30

(u) Eph. 4.

39

many times heard of a day of reckoning and accounts, and that the Lord (x) *Iesus Will come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God and obey not his Gospel.* Ye have heard of the terrors of the Almighty, of the extrem and un-conceivable torments of hell, without ease or any kind of mitigation, unto ail eternity, that such as are cast into that prison cannot escape nor come out, but must lye in (y) *the Wine press of the fierceness and Wrath of the Almighty God for ever and ever; for then he (z) that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour, &c.* But ye have not regarded nor laid those things to heart, as if ye had not been concerned in such matters; the terrible day of the Lord hath not been a terror to you, secure, bold, presumptuous sinners, who can defie the devil and know that the Lord is mercifull; but now the question is put home to your doors in this most dreadfull case, concerning your final state; and such evidences are brought as your present condition and by-past life will afford: (and that no small discovery from thence may be had, you have heard from the Word of God) And now what sayest thou, O secure sinner, whoever thou be, whether man or woman, rich or poor? what answer canst thou return? art thou still stout-hearted and far from fear? mayest thou not read thy name in the black roll of them who have the mark of hell and perdition upon their fore-head? dost thou not find thy self to be included (ask thy conscience and deal plainly, and darest thou say that thou art not) in one or moe of those cursed ranks of persons, who are forsaken of God, judicially plagued and hardned; and therefore devoted to destruction? 1. Hast thou not enjoyed pure and powerfull ordinances? and yet, &c. We need not resume the severall particulars, but leaving that to thy meditation, and obresting thee to reflect upon thine own heart and wayes, and to make a comparison, let us now only warn thee of thy danger, and that there be moe lying under this judicial stroke then is believed; from whence comes it, that such powerfull Ordinances have no influence, that men will not see though the light of the Gospel doth so clearly shine before their eyes, that neither the
sweet

sweet promises and consolations of the Almighty, nor yet his terrible threatenings and judgments do affect? Must not that sad word, *I sa. 6. 9, 10.* be accomplished in many? would not Pagans tremble, while we sleep? would not the word (*z*) prick their hearts, that cannot pierce our skin? (*a*) *Tyre and Sydon would have repented long ago in sack-cloth and ashes*, and behold we continue in impenitency and daily add to our iniquities; if *Sodom* had enjoyed this day of the Gospel which we abuse, (*b*) *it would have remained to this day*; but if the Lord had dealt with us according to our wayes, he should have long ere now, (*c*) *removed the Gospel from us, and given it to a Nation that would have brought forth the fruits thereof.* And what reason have we to fear lest the Lord at length vindicate the contempt of his glorious Kingdom among us, with such dreadful judgements, as all who hear may be astonished. If Ministers were askt, how many in their respective charges had escaped, and were not concerned in any of these marks of indignation and rejection? ah! how should we tremble to speak, and they to hear the answer that could be given? and how glad might that Pastor be, who had reason to say, that the fourth ground (as in the parable, *Mat. 13.*) were good; yea, or that the tenth part of his flock did walk worthy of the Gospel? The famous *Chrysostom*, (who answered his (*d*) name, being one of the most eminent Preachers of his time) (*e*) propounds the like question in a Sermon to the people of *Antioch*, among whom, (it would have appeared, looking to his pains and their profession) he had done much good; *How many, in this our great City of Antioch, think ye (saith this zealous Doctor) shall be saved? It will be a hard speech which I must utter, yet I will speak it, among all the thousands in this place, I cannot find one hundred that shall be saved.* Ah! was not this an uncharitable doom, concerning so many well-meaning honest folk, that though there was in that great City, above one hundred thousand persons, (as is thought) yet there should not one hundred of them all be saved, and so not one of a thousand? was not that a hard saying? and yet he had too good ground to think and speak so, as there he goes on to shew from the life and

(*z*) Acti 2.
37.
(*a*) Mat. 11.
21.
(*b*) Mat 11.
33.
(*c*) Mat. 23.
43.
(*d*) *χρυσόστομος* aureus seu aureus vocatus, Scap. in voc. *soyua*:
(*e*) *Quot esset putatis in civitate nostra Antiochia qui salventur? durum ac molestum est quod disturbus sum, dicam tamen, non possum in tota millibus centum invenire qui salventur; verum & de his dubito, nam &c.*
Chryl. serm. 4. ad pop. Antioch.

works of young and old; and in these lands (where the Gospel hath been as purely and powerfully preach'd, as ever it was among any people since the Apostles dayes) how many Pastors have reason to joyn with him in the like regrave and lamentation, and in much anguish of spirit to ask, with the Prophet, *who hath believed their reports? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* Isa. 53. 1. A Minister perhaps is sent to a Paroch to seek one lost sheep, while not only ninety and nine, but nine hundred are suffered to wander and perish in their crooked wayes; who, though they hear the Pastors voice, yet never hearken nor return: who would not have thought that *Paul* should have met with a good seed-time in *Philippi*, the chief city of that part of *Macedonia*, *Act.* 16. 12. after such an extraordinary and promising invitation to come and help that people as he got? *Act.* 16. 9. and yet, how small a harvest did follow, there being, by his ministry in that place, converted only one merchant woman *Lydia*, with her family; and with much a do the jaylor: for, first, the earth must quake, and the prison foundations shake, and it's doors open, before his stout heart did tremble or would yield and open to Christ, *ver.* 14, 15, 26, 29. And, now a dayes, how few are they who make conscience of their wayes, and are working out their salvation with fear and trembling? Ah! do not the wicked lives of many who are reputed good Christians, their formality in the worship of God, their negligence, neutrality and indifferency in matters of soul-concernment, their pride, avarice, self-love and self-seeking make it too manifest, (though there were no such thing recorded in the Word), that of the (f) *many who are called and hear the Gospel, only a few are chosen and shall be saved?* but ah! who doth ponder and lay this to heart? our neighbours and kins-folk are daily leaving us and going to the pit; and yet we their foolish (g) posterity and acquaintance approve and follow their way, and while we see them die as they lived and perish in their security and vain confidence, we are ready to say their end was peace, and they died well: and is not this brutish stupidity an evidence, that we are lying under a judicial stroke? since thus (h) *bearing, we do not understand, and seeing, we do*

(f) Mat. 23.
26. Mat. 22.
14. &c.

(g) Pl. 49. 13.

(h) Mat. 13.
24. 15.

do.

do not perceive nor lay to heart, that we might escape the like snare, and be converted and healed: and were there no more but the want of sense and feeling while you hear or read such a terrible discovery of the lamentable state of so many among you, that were enough to alarm you; for, had not your hearts been harder then an adamant, with what terror and pricking of conscience would you have cryed out? Wo's me, I have too good reason to fear, lest I be one of that number who are plagued and forsaken of God, and who must perish eternally. If there were any such marks, whereby we could discover when men would die or suffer any considerable loss in their state and outward condition, and if accordingly we did warn a whole Congregation, that one of them should die in a day or weeks space, how earnestly would all enquire? yea, would any be at rest till he knew whether or not he were the man? The disciples were not more anxious when they heard, that one of them should betray their Master, nor did they more earnestly ask, (i) *Lord, is it I?* (i) Mat. 26. 22. *is it I?* then every one would ask and say, *'s it I?* is it I that can live no longer? But yet, while not one in a Paroch, but perhaps all except one, are warned, from the word of truth, of the eternal ruine of both soul and body, yet, how negligent careless and secure are they? and have we not then reason to lament and say, ah I desperat sinners, (k) who hath (k) Gal. 3: 1. thus infatuated and bewitched you?

But, to say no more to such sleepers, who deserve not to hear one word more till they be awaked in hell, I would turn me to others, if I knew where to look: Ah I are there none who will hear or lay their deplorable case to heart? Ah! must I be silent, or else suppose what I cannot see; and imagine some to be so affected, awaked and terrified by this discovery; or any such like warning from whatsoever hand? ah I will none tremble while they see themselves to hing over the mouth of the pit by a small thread, which may be broken before they draw their breath? Is there no mourning captive who seeing himself taken and held by this wofull snare, will in much anguish of spirit, horror and confusion say, [ah I] is there no remedy? though my case seem desperat, yet, is there

(1) Jer. 8, 22.

there no (1) balm in *Gilead*? are my wounds so incurable, that the great Physician could not heal them? are there not bowels in the God of mercy to receive me yet? were it now in vain to lay out my desperat and hopeless condition to him? would he not hear if I should call on him? I have (alas) destroyed my self, and hitherto rejected all his counsel, and therefore it were a just thing with God to laugh at my calamity, and mock when my fear cometh, and to hide his face from my prayers.] Prov. 1. 26 28.

(m) Heb. 12: 12.

To such as are in this sad condition, I have some few things to say, partly by way of warning and caution, partly by way of counsel and direction, and partly for supporting and strengthening (m) *the feeble knees, and lifting up the hands that hang down.* And, 1. beware lest thy fear and apprehended danger feed thy lusts and desperat security, and make thee say, (with them; Isa. 22. 13. 1 Cor. 13. 2.) *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die*; if we must perish, let us take a merry life of it so long as we may; certainly that were a wrong course for being eased of your fears, and that which would without remedy bring you to destruction; the premisses are sad and terrible, but the conclusion drawn from thence is mad and desperat; and thus you bind, as with strong cords, that wofull threatning to your own backs, and by making it a plea for thy brutish sensuality and desperat contempt of the means, thou proclaimest thy hypocrisie, and that thy fears were not real but pretended; and thus makes it appear, that thou indeed art the man who hast reason to tremble and fear, as being caught in the snare out of which thou wilt never escape: Ah! but were your fears real, and if you did seriously desire to be eased of them, you would rather take such a course as the people of *Nineveh* did in a case much like to this, they being under a sad and (as it would then have appeared) most peremptory threatning, yet say they, *who can tell if God will turn from his fierce anger?* and for their part, they turned from their evil wayes and humbled themselves before the Lord, crying mightily unto him, and ye know what the event was, *God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and he did it not,* Jon. 3.

But

But let me tell thee, O secure and desperat sinner, who wilt be at no pains, and yet complainest of the terrors of the Almighty, as thou began with the *mercy* of God, abusing it, and encouraging thy self from thence to add sin to sin, and to continue in thy wicked wayes, So after thou hast served thy turn with that most glorious attribute, which should have led thee in to repentance, thou now takest thy self to his *justice* and threatenings, as if these did chase thee away, and hold thee off from closing with, and seeking after the Lord; while indeed they should drive thee in to him, and make thee forsake and turn from the evil of thy doings: But will the Lord suffer infatuated sinners thus to mock his holy Majesty, and to pervert and abuse those divine excellencies, and to encourage themselves from thence to continue in their wickedness and rebellion against him? and were it not a righteous thing with him, to send such fools to hell to learn wisdom there? that they might become better divines then to bring from heaven a cloak, pretence, or encouragement to sin (for as sinners in hell know better the evil and parentage of sin, So they are more sensible of their own folly) and since at length they have taken themselves to Gods justice and severity, were it not fit to make them find the power of his justice and wrath unto all eternity?

But, 2. if thou be indeed awakened, and to purpose pricked in heart, and askest, what must I do? is there no remedy? I would counsel thee to humble thy self before the Lord, and to cry mightily for a broken and contrit spirit; thy case is most sad and dangerous, and thou must not expect to go through without trouble and difficulty; the imposthume is inveterat, and therefore thou must suffer the lancet to go the deeper; what ever course the Lord take with others, who have not so grieved and dishonoured him, and though he draw them in with a word of love, and softly open their heart, as he did *Lydias*, Act. 16. 14. yet if ever thou be born again, its likely to be by sore labour and travail; all who are about thee will hear thee cry out of the pangs of thy new birth: and the deeper the foundation be cast, the building will be the surer and stronger; and the more sick thou

art, thou wilt be the welcomer to the Physician,

For, 3. albeit thy case be so dangerous, yet it is not altogether desperat; and therefore thou mayst seek after a remedy, and must seek the more diligently; general threatenings though most peremptory and irrevocable (as it would appear by the maner of expression) yet leave room to the free grace and mercy of God to pity whom he will; its his royal prerogative to scrape out whose name he pleaseth out of the black roll of judgments, either spiritual or temporal, and that he may magnifie the riches of his free grace he will sometimes lay hold on the worst of sinners, on *Manasseh*, *Paul*, the Thief, *Rahab*, *Mary Magdalene*, &c. We need not have named these, or any such instances, for these are well known to such as know little more of the Scriptures, and it were good for them that they either knew more, or that they knew not so much, since they make that knowledge a wofull snare to themselves; for what should be an encouragment, and open a door of hope to penitent sinners to turn from their evil wayes to the living God, they make a ground and encouragment to continue in their sins, to delay their repentance, and turn their back on God: To thee then, and for thy use, O mourning penitent and disconsolat one, are those examples, and (as it were) miracles of mercy recorded in the Word, that thou shouldst not despair, but lay hold on the sure word of promise and invitation, *come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, Mat. 11. 28. *Whosoever will, let him take*, &c. Rev. 22. 17. &c. Is not that a sweet and full Word? is there not room enough there for to receive thee? is not that a plaister fitted for thy sore? is not that Word large and comprehensive, both as to persons their condition and exigence, and as to the circumstance of time? O do not then say, ah! that it had come a little sooner before the day of grace was past, its too late for me now to lay hold on mercy when the doors are shut and lockt by an irrevocable threatening; for the day of grace is never so far spent to any sincere penitent, but he hath day-light enough to let him see home; and the door of mercy always stands open

open to such, and they shall have no reason to complain that they came too late and could find no entry: The promises of the Gospel know no other term, but what time soever a sinner doth repent; *when I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely dye, if he turn from his sin, he shall surely live, and not dye*, Ezck. 33. 14, 15. Ezk. 18. 27. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation or kingdom, (and why not also concerning a person or family?) so pluck up, and-to pull down and destroy it; if it turn from its evil ways, then I will repent of the evil I thought to do unto them*, Jer. 18. 7, 8. *let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God for he will abundantly pardon*, Isa. 55. 7.

But you will say, I saw in these characters my name written in such legible letters, that he who runs might have read; my case and condition was so set out to the life, that no place was left for shifts and evasions, I know my self to be included in one or more of those cursed ranks, and is it possible for me to escape that dreadful sentence pronounced against me by the mouth of him who is truth it self? *Ans.* But may not the Lord give the occasion with *Paul* to say, *I who was before a blasphemer, persecuter and miserable wretch, have now obtained mercy*, 1 Tim. 1. 13. see Eph. 2. 2, 3, 4. Tit. 3. 3. &c. What? or who can hinder the infinit bowels of mercy from embracing thee? There is no threatening so peremptory as to bind up Gods hands, that he may not pity and shew mercy to whom he will nor receive a sincere penitent, Ezek. 33. 14. &c. And as to those characters, they hold forth (as we said) grounds of fear, and far more then a probable conjecture concerning the final state and eternal portion of such as did come under them; but are not infallible rules, nor a sufficient warrant for us to pass a peremptory sentence against our selves, or others in reference to the decree of reprobation; we are exhorted to give all diligence to make our election sure, 2 Pet. 1. 10. but we are no where commanded to make our damnation sure; there be in the Scriptures infallible marks of the one, but not of

of the other, the one is a duty, and our sweet priviledge; but the other is left to be manifested by that finall sentence after death, and at the day of judgment, *depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire*, Mat. 25. 41.

4. Then art thou convinced and humbled? is sin imbittered unto thee? and darst thou sin no more? seest thou thy need of a Physitian, and is Christ precious in thine eyes?
- (n) Colof. 1. &c. this is a good evidence that the sentence and (n) hand-writing that was against thee, is taken out of the way and nailed to the cross of Christ; so that now thy name shall no more be found in that dreadful catalogue of such as are fitted for destruction, for they who are thus left, and finally forsaken of God, he *gives them over to a reprobate mind*, Rom. 1. 28. and giveth them up unto vile affections, and to their own hearts lusts, and suffers them to walk in their own courses, Rom. 1. 26. *P/al.* 81. 12 he gives them over to be a prey to Sathan, and to (o) walk according to the course of the world, according to the prince of power of the air, the spirit that worketh mightily in the children of disobedience, &c. Since then this is not now thy case nor course, thou mayst be confident that by the grace of God thou hast escaped out of that wofull snare, and now what needs discourage thee? There is no sin nor condition though never so desperat that can exclude the penitent from mercy; yea, not the sin against the holy Ghost, which is unpardonable, nor because it is greater then the mercy of God, or as if there were not worth enough in Christs blood to be a ransom for it, but because the Lord in his righteous judgment doth finally forsake all them who fall into this blasphemy, so that they shall never repent, nor seek after a remedy: If then thou dost truly repent and turn from thy evil wayes, this is a sure evidence that thou art not thus forsaken, nor judicially plagued; and therefore be of good courage in following thy duty and seeking after a remedy; whatever thou hast been, none of the sins that thou hast committed shall be mentioned unto thee, nor remembered against thee any more, *Ezek.* 18. 22. *Ezek.* 33. 16.

But,

But, 3: albeit the Lord, to magnifie the riches of his free grace, may shew mercy to the most vile and wretched sinners, and pass by moral civil men, yet how few are there of the many thousands, who being included in the former ranks, are lying under that terrible threatening, that do partake of the mercy of God? You can tell me of *Manasseh, Paul, &c.* (who yet had not such (p) means of salvation as we, nor despised such convincing and soul-converting Ordinances,) but what are these in respect of the many millions who from time to time have perished under that sentence and judgment? What be some six or seven persons among all the men and women of the world (who have been thus guilty) for the space of four or five thousand years? that is but a poor coal for thee (O desperately secure sinner!) to blow at; though *Alexander and Julius Caesar* did conquer a great part of the world, wilt thou therefore expect to do the same? if one in an age or countrey, who hath lived for a while, as thou still dost, hath obtained mercy; wilt thou therefore presume, and think likewise to be saved? why dost thou not then also think, that thou shalt not taste of death, since *Enoch and Elias* were translated and taken up to heaven? nay, were it not a strange and admirable thing to see such escape out of the snare, how would they be affected when they heard their deplorable state laid out before them? and yet they can hear such a dolefull Sermon, and be no more affected therewith, then the dasks whereon they sit: must not such be past feeling, and given over to a reprobate mind? and yet not a few of such desperat wretches, will profess they trust in God, and hope to be saved as well as the holiest Saint on earth: But whatever be their bold and mad presumption, and how little soever they regard the faithfull warnings they meet with, or fear the threatnings and terrors of the Almighty, yet, to my observation, I never knew, nor heard of any in my time, except three or four, who in any eminent degree came under these characters, that to the discerning of judicious Christians, met with mercy; and this admirable dispensation towards them, was matter of astonishment to all who heard of it, except such desperat

(p. Though Paul, if he had been a bearer of Christ and his Apostles, might have enjoyed extraordinary means; yet his education and engagements to the sect of the Pharisees, did deprive him of that light, which did then shine among them.

wretches as made a cursed use of it, encouraging themselves thereby to continue in their wicked wayes: But let none mistake what we say, we do not, we dare not pass a peremptory sentence concerning the state of others, especially those whose guiltiness was not so great, notour and scandalous; and though we know but a few, who grossly and palpably came under these marks, who did evidence a sensible and considerable measure of saving repentance, (and in such a case, when it is real, it will not be small) yet we did not deny, but the Lord might have a secret work on the hearts of some on their death-bed, which he will not make so discernable to others, that all may be afraid to follow such a course of life, and that none might presume and delay to the end of the day: yet, since none may limit the Lord, Ministers must not turn their back on such; as if their case were altogether desperat; but they must warn and exhort them, committing the event and success to him who can abundantly pardon, and show mercy when, and to whom he will.

But supposing thee who art thus awakned and pricked in heart, who art sensible of thy danger, and now on the right way to escape, to be one of that small number, whom the Lord will make a miracle of mercy; I have a sixth word (and that a very necessary one) to thee; beware that thou quench not this as former motions of the Spirit; Ah! let not this storm be like the noise of thunder, terrible for the time, but of short continuance; and then thou might'st be afraid, *least there remain no more sacrifice for thy sins, but a certain fearfull looking for of judgment and fiery indignation*, Heb. 10. 26, 27. *because (saith the Lord) I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee*, Ezek. 24. 13. If then thou be such a one as is supposed, thou wilt not thus draw back, after the Lord hath begun to awaken and purge; thou wilt take no rest till a saving change be wrought in thee, and till thou lay hold on the rock of salvation; and then with what enlarged affections wilt thou admire and praise the riches of his goodness and mercy, who hath pitied and pulled such a desperat

desperat sinner out of the snare: thou wilt become a new creature indeed, and all who know thee, will have reason to praise God for thee, and from that time forth thou wilt walk humbly, circumspectly and exemplarily: thou wilt often look on the skar of thy old wound, and thou wilt say (with Paul in a like case, 1 Cor. 15. 8. 9.) *I was as one born out of due time, I am the least of all Saints, that am not meet to be called a Saint, because I, &c.* And thus thou wilt also resolve (with him, ver. 10.) by the grace of God to labour more abundantly then others; and thou wilt often put up this question to thy soul, ah! what shall I render to the Lord for his marvellous loving kindness toward me? ah! what shall I do? and what can I suffer for the honour of his great Name, whom I have so much dishonoured, and that I may become a good example to those whom I have so much, and so oft scandalized? thou must, after that, be (in some sort) a non-such, if thou be such as thou ought'st to be.

Thus we may see that the present point, though most dreadfull and terrible, yet doth not exclude any mourning penitent from pardon. But lastly, that no obstruction may seem to lye in the way of such, we will speak a word for clearing that place, *Prov. 1. 26, 27, 28, &c.* where the Lord threatneth to reject all their tears, prayers, and endeavours. *Ans.* 1. some perhaps may think to elude the present difficulty, by affirming the meaning of that threatning not to be absolute, but conditional, so that we may not from thence conclude that any, who was in such a case, ever did, or shall cordially pray to God; and that he will refuse to answer their effectual fervent prayers; since, only by way of supposition, it is said, though they should call, yet he would not answer nor regard their complaint; as the offer of salvation, made to the reprobate, if they believe and repent, doth not import that any such ever did, or shall repent and be saved; So on the other hand, neither doth this threatning imply, that any, who fall under it, should in truth call upon the Lord, and he hide his face from their prayers; and therefore, if the Lord pour out the Spirit of prayer upon thee,

this threatening needs not discourage thee; but thou mayst be confident, that either thy name is taken out of that threatening, or that it was never included in it.

But this answer seemeth not to be satisfactory, 1. because its contrary, 1. to all the invitations and promises made to the penitent, what ever have been their former provocations and course of life; 2. those general propositions so frequently held forth in the Gospel, *viz.* (q) [whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord Jesus, shall be saved; (r) all that labour and are heavy laden, may come to Christ and he will give them rest, &c.] Hence, orthodox Divines do not scruple to yield to the Arminians, these hypotheticks, [if *Indas* had repented and come to Christ for rest, he should have been saved; if (s) *Cain*, when he went out from the presence of the Lord, had poured out his soul before the Lord, he would not have been rejected, &c.] and there is good reason for such an hypothesis, since it may be reduced to an universal categorick, and absolute enunciation, *viz.* [All true penitents and sincere supplicants, *Paul*, *Peter*, &c. were saved.] but that hypothetick, for which this answer doth plead, cannot be resolved in any categorick that is true; nay, it hath not so much as one instance, or particular whereupon it might be built; for no man did ever seek after the Lord, and call upon him in truth, who did not meet with an answer of peace. But, 2. if that hypothesis were true, then every door of hope must be shut against such penitents, for though they should mourn and cry to God, yet he would not hear nor answer; to what purpose then should we exhort such to repent and call upon the Lord? there is not a word of command or exhortation in the Word, that hath not a promise, by way of motive and encouragment, annexed to it; and we need not run to those Scriptures in which the Lord universally promiseth, that whensoever a sinner shall return from the evil of his doings, and seek his face, he will receive him graciously; since the words immediatly, both going before and following, *viz.* ver. 23. and 33, do hold forth with the exhortation, to such as were lying under that sad threatening, to turn and seek the Lord, a promise

(q) A.C. 2. 21.

(r) Mat. 11.

28.

(s) Gen. 4.

26.

mise and intimation of mercy, if they should answer his call and invitation; and therefore, though this threatening be most peremptory, yet it doth not exclude a condition, exception and limitation for the manifestation of the riches of free grace; as hath been shown.

2. Then as to the scope and sense of these words, *Prov. 1. 26.* We *Ans.* the Lord there threatneth to reject not such a prayer as we have described, and can plead a promise; and to which we did exhort, but such a prayer as may be in bell, it being nothing else but a brutish howling, because of some outward rod and calamity; and though such a complaint be directed to the Lord, (as the words, *ver. 28.* do imply) yet the motives being carnal, and their ends selfish, its no prayer in God's account, though it get the name, and such cryers may be said to call upon the Lord, yet it is not such a prayer as may lay claim to a promise; albeit the Lord sometimes, out of his general bounty, may answer such a cry, and give to such supplicants their request, when he sends leanness into their soul, *Psal. (1) 106. 15, 43, 44.* &c. But though thus he may pity his creatures in misery, and answer their carnal desires, yet for such as are lying under that sad threatening, *Prov. 1.* he will (u) laugh at their calamity, and while they thus call upon him, he will not answer: we have a parallel Scripture, *Hos. 7. 13, 14.* where as he threatneth to destroy them notwithstanding such carnal devotion, so he tells them, that their prayers deserved not the name, as not proceeding from an humble and sincere heart; *We unto them, for they have sinned from me; destruction unto them, because they have transgressed against me: and they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they assemble themselves for corn and wine, and they rebell against me.* But though the Lord reject such carnal prayers, yet this needs not discourage thee, who offerest up to him a broken and contrite heart, a sacrifice which he never did, nor will despise, *Pf. 51. 17. Pf. 34. 18.*

But, since the Saints are ready here to stumble, a word would be added for preventing their mistake; for, as dogs

are

(t) I deny not that in such publick mercies and deliverances as the Psalmist there mentioneth, the Lord may have respect to his saints and their prayers, and for their sake do good to a multitude.

(u) Yet neither thus is that threatening so absolute, but it may (as in Ahab, &c.) admit a condition and exception in reverence to some holy end and design, at which the Lord may aim at in such a dispensation.

are ready to snatch the childrens bread, so the children may gnaw the bones that are cast to the dogs; as the wicked may lay hold on the promise that belongs not to them; so the Saints on the threatening which they need not fear; while the Master doth frown and is angry with his slothfull and unfaithfull servant; the child may tremble; and the hand lift up with a stone to be cast at the dog, may startle the tender son; though those who are concerned in this sad judgement and threatening, are not affected nor awaked while they hear their dreadfull doom, yet some of the Lords precious ones may tremble and fear lest this be their case: therefore,

1. I would have such observe; that those characters are not to be understood of one or two particular acts, but of a course, state, trade and continuance in such and such sins; for, what is the particular sin, into which the Lords chosen ones (yes and after their conversion) may not fall?
2. That men and women may go a great length, and come very nigh the curse, and yet escape; there is a certain measure in sinning which the Lord hath appointed and proportioned for spiritual, as well as for temporal judgements; which we can hardly define, because it is not one and the same to all and every one; and the Lord will use some variety, and leave us all in the dark here, that on the one hand, none might presume to continue one day in their sinfull wayes, nor to add one sin more to that cursed heap, lest that one sin fill up the measure and bring down the judgement; and on the other hand, that none should despair, so long as the Gospel-offer and the means of grace are continued with them; and that others might be charitable, and not dare to pass a peremptory sentence against any man, as to his rejection, reprobation and eternal portion.
3. The Saints would not forget to put a difference between that *partial hardness* that remaineth in the heart after its renovation and conversion, and that *total and universal hardness* of the heart before the grace of God thaw, soften and mollifie it; and that *judicial hardness* and induration wherewith the Lord in his judgement plagueth secure sinners, while he giveth them up to the lusts of their own heart; which is yet worse then the former, it being a

load

load above a load : for, although the godly may complain as of a body of sin and death yet lodging in them, so of much dulness and indisposition for spiritual duties, and of much deadness and slowness of spirit, under melting ordinances, and awakening dispensations ; yet they have reason to praise God, (yea even then when they are thus mourning and complaining) that they are not lying under that total, far less the judicial hardness of heart, which is both the sin and misery of cast-awayes, *Rom. 7. 24, 25.* And though the Saints may be brought very low, and not meet with that enlargement in prayer which others or they themselves sometimes have had, yet the spirit of prayer is not altogether taken from them, as from those who are judicially plagued and deserted ; for, though the wind do not so blow, nor fill their sails as formerly, yet by a secret hand they are still carried on in their way, and held in motion ; and they may find the spirit to press and stir them up to their duty, though they do not so sensibly find his help and assistance in the performance of the duty.

CHAP. III.

An exhortation to continue instant in prayer ; with an answer to objections.

Albeit we might well press this exhortation from what hath been here said, concerning the certainty of success, and the return of prayer ; yet we have reserved this Chapter rather to be the conclusion of the whole Treatise, then of any one Part : and in it we shall, 1. press, 2. vindicate this duty.

Sect. I.

Several motives for pressing the constant and serious practice of this soul-enriching performance.

Rom. 12. 12. — *continuing instant in prayer.*

Luk. 18. 1. *And he spake a parable unto them, to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint.*

(a) Colos. 1.
10.
(b) Rev. 21.
9.

WHile we divide, and thus compare contemplation with action, we spoil both of their excellency and perfection; their conjunction is sweet and successfull, but a divorce is sad and grievous; and who would choose either to want his eyes or his hands? and therefore, though knowledge (especially in matters of soul-concernment) be one of the most noble perfections whereof we are capable, as being a part of the divine (a) Image which we lost in Adam, and shall at length be perfectly restored by him who said, (b) *Behold, I make all things new.* Yet, if it be not rightly improved, if it be empty, and not accompanied with a suitable practice, action, life and conversation, it will do us no good, but much hurt; it may puff us up, and make us boast as if we were non-suches, 1 Cor. 8. 1. it may make us idle and negligent, as if it were enough to know something, and as if they were the best Christians who know most: thus forgetting, that the true Israelites Motto is, *homage*; our happiness doth not (like the empty, mistaken Pagan, philosophical, speculative dream) consist in contemplation; we are called to work, knowledge will not do the turn, it cannot make us happy, yea or draw us out of the category of *nothing*, 1 Cor. 13. 2. but the more we know, if we be idle, negligent and unfaithfull, the worse we are, and our stripes shall be the more, Luk. 12. 47. O! ye who would rather be Christians indeed then accounted such, and who (c) love the praise of God more then the praise of men; would it satisfy you to know the way to salvation if ye did not walk in it? or to hear and speak much of God, if ye were strangers to a communion with him, and lived at a distance from him? And what would

(c) Joh. 12.
43.
Rom. 2. 29.

would it profit you, though you knew all that could be said concerning the nature, qualifications, excellency and use of prayer, if ye fail and come short as to the practice of it? This was the scope whereat we aimed all along this discourse, and in every part of it we laboured to hold forth somewhat for our encouragement, help and direction herein; and therefore, all must be lost labour to the slothfull and negligent, and to such as will not make conscience to continue instant in the performance of this sweet soul-ravishing and enriching duty. Ah! who is able to hold forth all the motives and arguments that may serve to stir us up hereunto? And now in the close we shall only name, and briefly hint at, some few things; looking up to him who only can give the blessing, who only can perswade and enable us to pray as we ought, and who can help us from fainting in our fervent and frequent addresses to the throne of Grace.

1. We may (with the (d) Apostle in another case) appeal to nature it self, doth it not teach you to pray? Ask the Brutes, the Ravens, Lyons, &c. Job 38. 41. Ps. 147. 9. Ps. 104. 27. Ps. 145. 15. not as if these unreasonable creatures could know and worship God, but because nature hath taught them so much of this duty, as they are capable of and can bear; they have some sense of their burdens and wants, they groan and cry, and desire to be eased; and the Lord hearkeneth to this voice and saith, now the poor creature is crying to me, and I will pity it. Ah! shall the beasts in their own way cry to God, and wilt thou be silent? hath the Lord elevated thee so far above these inferiour creatures, and fitted thee for the immediat acts of his Worship and for a communion with himself, and wilt thou not serve him accordingly? hath he given thee a heart and spiritual soul, as he hath given the Brutes a sensitive appetite and natural desire, and shall they cry to God with the one, and not thou with the other?

But, 2. reason in man being of a deeper reach then sensitive nature in the brutes, it not only seeth trouble and wants at home, but also can look up to the right treasure from whence a supply may be had. Thus (e) Heathens and Pa-

H h h h h

gans,

(d) 1 Cor. 11. 14.

(e) *Ideo apud varios hominum nationes quicumque nomen aliquod sibi ducuntur, te vindicare, circa precum orationumque studia se exer-cuerunt: ut apud Indos Brachmanz, apud Persas Magi, inter Græcos Theologi, in Assyriis, Chaldeis, &c. Fran. Venet. de hist. mundi cant. 3. tom. 6. cap. 15. Ora-re nobis proprium est; ut Plato, Porphyrius, Jamblicus, & Proclus docent: totum genus humanum omni tempore omni loco, omniaque nationes divinæ præcibus deditum fuit, ibid. cant. 1. tom. 1 cap. 16.*

gans, by the light of natural reason, can not only discern the eternal Power and God-head of their Maker, *Rom. 1. 20.* but also much of that duty they owe to him, *Rom. 2. 14, 15.* And in the first place, that they should offer to him the sacrifice of prayer and praise; all men naturally may know, that they are obliged to render this homage, and pay this tribute of all their enjoyments to the great King. Hence, Divines acknowledge prayer and praise to be a branch of that natural worship, which the Law, written on the heart (*Rom. 2. 15.*) by the work of creation, doth prescribe:

(f) Hence Phocylides his Odey (and the Pythagorean verses, their Odes) Tima, and Plutarch his Odey go-
 βουλας, is acknowledged to be a fundamental principle known to all men; Πα-
 ρὰ πάντων (saith Zeno-
 phon) Ἀνθρώποις νόμος κοινός. And that this general doth clearly comprehend our case, none (I think) will deny.

(g) Qui nescit mare, discat navigare.

(h) Isa. 6. 10.

(i) Mat. 7. 7.

(k) 1 Cor. 3. 5.

And (f) Pagans themselves do reckon this among the first and most undeniable principles of their Theology; and though for ordinary they do not improve this known principle, nor hearken to the cries and challenges of a natural conscience, convincing them of the neglect, and calling them to go about this duty, yet in the day of calamity, and when the Lords hand lyes heavy upon them, they will cry to him; the most stupid, stubborn and desperat wretch will then take him to his devotion. It was well said by one, *He (g) who cannot pray, let him go to sea,* and the storm will learn him this point of Divinity: when the wind was boisterous and the Pagan Mariners afraid, they will not only practise, but preach this point with much zeal and tenderness, *What meanest thou, O sleeper? (say they to Jonah) Arise, call upon thy God,* Jon. 1. 6.

Thus all are taught, and may learn, their duty; but the Lords own people have many other Monitors and Instructors, they meet with many voices calling and inviting them to call upon God; where canst thou cast thine eyes, but there thou mayest behold a Teacher, and hear a voice pointing out the way to the throne? The Lord doth call and invite us to our duty, both by his Word and Works; but, alas! who hath (b) ears to hear when he speaketh? or a heart to consider what he saith? And, 1. there is scarce a line in the Scriptures which holds not forth some one or other motive hereunto; 1. (i) precepts and commands should chase thee (who art of thy self so weak, and not (k) sufficient for one good thought) in to him, of whom is all our sufficiency, and who only can strengthen and enable us both to will and to do.

2. The

2. The (1) promises cry to thee, O make hast, do not linger, run to the throne; the blessing is brought to the birth, and only waiteth for the midwifery of prayer. 3. (m) Threatnings should drive thee into the provoked Majesty, to deprecate his wrath, to cry for mercy, and to beg a pardon that none of those evils thy sins have deserved may befall thee. 4. Challenges, we may hear the Lord saying to us to day, what he said to his ancient people, *If. 43. 21, 22. This people have I formed for my self, they shall shew forth my praise: but thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.* 5. Every passage of providence held forth in the Word, should make thee say, Lord (n) teach me to improve aright what is (o) recorded in the sacred Volumn for my instruction, comfort or humiliation, that I may fear and reverence thy great Name, and may not become an unfruitfull hearer, &c.

2. All Gods works and dispensations towards thee and the present generation, do joyn with his word; 1. all thy wants, dangers, (p) troubles, difficulties and temptations, yea and all the misery and afflictions of thy relations and of Gods people wheresoever, do invite thee to run to the full Treasure for a supply, to run to the Physician for a remedy, to run to the rock of strength and defence, and to him who is able to save and deliver, on whom thou mayest cast all thy burdens, (q) resting securely under the shadow of his wings in the day of greatest calamity. 2. All thy mercies and enjoyments personal or publick, do summon thee as to pay the (r) tribute of praise to the great and liberal Giver, so to pray for grace to improve these many talents our Master hath intrusted us with, to the honour of his Name, that they may (s) prove blessings indeed, and may not be given and continued with us in wrath, and so become snares and wofull temptations. 3. All the good we expect or desire to our selves and others (t) complain of our silence, and say, Ah! why do ye thus hedge up, and cast lets and impediments in the way, by sinning against our Master and Lord, and will not put to one hand to the work? where is your longing and desiring? will ye not do so much as cry? a

H h h h h 2

word

4.

(1) Joh. 16.

21.

(m) Jer. 10:

25.

5.

6.

7.

(n) Pl. 78. 6,

7. &c.

(o) 1 Tim. 3:

16, 17.

(p) Pl. 50. i 5.

8.

(q) Pl. 17. 8.

Pl. 36. 7. Pl.

57. 1. Pl. 63.

7.

9.

(r) Pl. 52. 15.

(s) 1 Tim: 4.

4. 5.

10.

(t) Ezck. 36.

37. Mat. 7. 7.

(u) PL 145.

19.

11.

(x) Col. 1. 9.

30, 11.

(y) Mat. 25.

27, 28

(z) Cant. 5.

6.

(a) Pl. 80. 18.

(b) 1 Pet. 5.

10.

(c) Mat. 9. 12.

(d) Pl. 50. 3.

4. 9. 11.

(e) Zech. 3. 1.

word with the King might do much; ah! know ye not that he will (u) fulfill the desire of his humble supplicants? 4. The graces of the spirit, as they call, 1. by (x) enabling us to go, (they themselves being talents bestowed upon us for this very end and purpose) So also, 2. for preventing their decay, and lest otherwise they be (y) taken from us, and we become unfit and unable to walk; if thou restrain prayer, the Lord will restrain the quickening and strengthening motions and influence of his spirit; and then what deadness and coldness will seize upon the soul? distempers will then creep on, and lusts will begin to reign and command: O then! if thou findest any fitness and disposition for the work, any stirring and heat within, sail while the wind bloweth; if thou quench the spirit by neglecting such an opportunity, thou mayest be put to wait, cry and (z) complain before thou meet with such a gale: again art thou indisposed? findest thou much coldness and deadness to have seized upon thee? O then! cry for fire from heaven to fall upon thy sacrifice; and beg that the spirit of life may breath upon thee: do not then say, I am weak, and therefore must not venture to wrestle with the strong and mighty one; thou knowest not well what thou sayest, whilst thou wouldst make thy weakness a plea for running away from the rock of strength and defence; art thou weak, and is it not the Lord who must (a) quicken and (b) enable thee? art thou (c) sick, and wilt thou not come to the Physician? art thou (d) afraid, and wilt thou not go where thou mayest be secure? When thou walkest with God and art speaking to him, he is engaged in thy quarrel; who dare offer violence to any man while he is in the Kings presence? the Saints are never so secure as while they are most fervent in prayer, and the nearer access they get, the more safe they are from Satans temptations; and though even then he may (e) assault them, yet he cannot hurt them nor work their ruine; prayer is a main part of our spiritual armour, whereby we are enabled to stand against the wiles of the devil, Eph. 6. 18. 11. and is it not better to put on our armour, then encounter temptations while we are weak and naked? And thus, neither our weakness nor strength.

strength; neither our fitness nor indisposition may be pretended as a plea for lying by; but both hold forth a strong motive and argument for drawing nigh to God: Art thou strong and lively, then thou art the more able, and the more engaged to thy duty? art thou weak and faint, then draw nigh to the fountain of life and strength? if conversing with the godly be a (f) mean for quickning our graces, far more must fellowship with the Lord himself work this blessed effect; and therefore prayer (in which after a special manner we converse with God) is held forth as the best mean of our edification and building up in the faith, *Jude*, 20. For as acquired habits are encreased by exercise, So also the habits of grace; and in prayer our faith and other graces are set a work and exercised, and therefore must also be strengthened, quickened and encreased.

(f) See Part
3. Chap. 2.
Sect. 2.

5. Our sins should send us to the throne of grace, to beg pardon and mercy: alas! they (g) cry for vengeance and judgements to be poured out upon us; and O! should not the *Echo* of that dreadful and lamentable voice alarm us to lift up our voice like a trumpet, and cry mightily to the Lord to blot out our iniquities, and to hide his face from their cry? ah! should we be silent while these bosom enemies night and day, without ceasing, make intercession against us? and since, of our selves, we cannot out-cry them, our voice being so weak that it cannot be heard, by reason of their noise; let us employ the Mediators help, his blood can (h) speak, and all the clamours of our sins cannot hinder the Lord from hearkning to what it saith.

13.
(g) *Gen.* 4.
10.

(h) *Heb* 12.
24.

6. While Satan (i) tempteth us to restrain prayer, this should provoke us to our duty; when the enemy (k) goeth about like a roaring Lyon seeking to destroy us, should not we flye to the city of refuge? and ah! whither should the child, when pursued, run, but in to the fathers bosom?

13.
(i) *Mat.* 16.
41.
(k) 1 *Pet.* 5.
8, 9, 10.

7. Our calling and holy profession, our vows and manifold engagements to him in whom we live, move and have our being, do oblige us to walk with him, depend upon him, and in every (l) thing, by prayer, supplication and thanksgiving, to make our requests known unto him; we are (m)

14.
(l) *Phl.* 4. 6.
(m) *Rev* 1. 6.

Priests,

- Priests*, and therefore must daily offer up to our God this spiritual sacrifice, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. we are his (n) *Friends* and favourites, to whom he manifests his secrets, and shall we not lay out our condition to him, and acquaint him with our purposes? ah! shall the Lord so often visit us by his Spirit, by his Word, and by his Works, and shall he not hear from us? is (o) this your kindness to your friend? would you deal so with a man like your self, and will ye thus (p) requite the Lord?
8. Our relation to God, as our (q) *Husband*, (r) *Father*, (s) *Lord* and *Master*, &c. doth engage us to the frequent performance of this sweet and amiable duty; what? art thou a wife, and delightest not in the presence and society of thy kind husband, art thou a son, (t) and wilt thou not draw nigh to thy loving father? what? hast thou such a husband and father, so great and excellent, and yet so kind and condescending, and dar'st thou thus undervalue his love? hast thou such a master, such a King and Lord, to whom thou may'st thus approach, and with whom converse so familiarly, and wilt thou not improve this privilege? ah! shall he stoop so low to thee, and wilt thou despise thine own mercies?
9. As our relation to God, So also our relation to our brethren and fellow-servants, doth oblige us to this; the (u) harvest is past, and the summer is come, and yet the people of God lye in *Babylon*, the Turk and Antichrist tread upon the Lords vineyard, and many ravening wolves are seeking to make a prey of the Saints, and shall not thy voice be heard bemoaning their condition? thou who hast moyen with the King, wilt thou not improve it in their behalf? and are we not debtors to the Jews, who yet continue in their blindness and infidelity? they were mindfull of their lile (x) sister, when she had no breasts, and now when our breasts are full, shall we forget the elder sister in her widowhood, living in a barren and empty wilderness? and then, as to our domestick and personal relations, where can we look, but we may behold some one or other, saying to us (as that (y) man of *Macedonia* to *Paul*) come and help us? you have

(n) Joh. 15.
15. Pl. 25. 14.

(o) 2 Sam.
16. 17.
(p) Deut. 32.
61

15.
(q) Cor. 11. 2.
(r) 1 Cor. 6.
18.

(s) Joh. 13.
13.

(t) Hinc Ad-
demici non-
nulli orbos il-
los & utriq;
carentes pa-
rentibus dice-
bant qui orati-
onibus preci-
busq; spresis
ad superiorem
divinamque
naturam con-
versi negligebant. Franc.
Venet. sans.
3. son. 6. cap.
35.

16.
(u) Jer. 8. 20.

(x) Cant. 8. 8.

(y) Act. 16. 9.

have moyn in heaven, speak for us to the King; your prayers will not be shut out; ye are our friends, and let us have your help in this time of need.

10. Our condition here, should mind us of our duty; we are but (z) pilgrims and strangers, and as we are far from home, and live at a distance from our fathers house, So also from our father; and though he will keep tryst with us in his ordinances, and allow us a sight of his back-parts, yet how little of God is seen and enjoyed while we are in this state of (a) absence and exile? But since our gracious God is pleased in some measure to descend to us in these, and make (as it were) a visit to his poor despicable creatures, saying to them, behold me, behold me, oh! how carefull should we be to improve every such opportunity for renewing and confirming our acquaintance with him, and for knowing and enjoying more of him, that thus the distance in part may be removed, our peace promoted, and our interest in him the more secured? frequency in approaching, will bring us nearer, and will beget familiarity and confidence; O, then from time to time (b) acquaint thy self with him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee: O, what familiarity and spiritual boldness, what satisfaction, sweetness, delight, enlargement, &c. have the Saints found in this ordinance? so that *Clement Alexandrinus* had reason to say (which also with him is acknowledged by the Jesuit (c) *Toler*) that upon this consideration, we should be more ready to ask, though we did not receive what we asked; then to have and receive what we desire without asking: prayer it self being a greater blessing then any outward mercy we can ask.

11. If thou canst, with the (d) Psalmist, say, I love the Lord, thou wilt, with him, also resolve to call upon the Lord as long as thou livest. Love is communicative, and must speak with the beloved, it is impatient of distance and absence, and will break thorow many impediments and difficulties, and O! since prayer will open a door, and give access, so that he is w thin a cry, and thou may'st speak to him, love will say, pray thou must; there will be no place left for debates and delays.

12. Where

17.
(z) 1 Pet. 2;

11

(a) 2 Cor. 5.

(b) Job. 22.

(c) Quare cum tantum sis bonum nostra petitio, merito, Clem. Alex. lib 7. *stram dicebat, plus paratum debere esse hominem petere, quam impetiri.*

quam impetrare non petendo: adeo eximium bonum est petitio, si recte fiat.

Fran. Toloc. in Joan. 16. v. 26.

(d) Ps. 116. 1.

19.

13. Where there is faith there will be no silence ; if thou list not up thy voice , faith will make thy conscience cry and roar, and will fill it with vexing challenges and accusations ; the believer is a (e) new creature, of an enemy he is become a son to him who never had a dumb child , and as, in the natural generation , the child usually cometh in to the world weeping , So in the spiritual regeneration , the man-child is brought forth with tears in his eyes , and with a cry ; the believer must look up to God , and lift up a prayer to him , and accordingly prayer gets an (f) epithet , and is called *the prayer of faith* ; these two are inseparable companions , and not only (like *Hippocrates* his twins) do they live and die , but also grow up together , and mutually strengthen and stir up one another ; the first news we hear of believing *Paul* , *Act. 9. 11.* were , *Behold he prayeth*. You will say , but did not *Paul* before this time pray ? *Ans.* No doubt , *Paul* , while a Pharisee (being so great a zealot) did pray , and very frequently , but there was no life in his prayers ; ye use to give the mans name to the dead corps , but the body void of life is not the man , neither is that prayer that is not the prayer of faith : and prayer is not an empty and fruitless associat , but it bringeth meat and provision with it ; and it is a monitor and guide , and a sure anchor which will keep the praying soul from wavering , *Jam. 1. 6.* and as thus they begin and grow up ; So they may be supposed to die together , when faith is turned into an immediat and blessed vision , and when neither we nor our brethren shall be exposed to any more wants and tryals , prayer shall give place to incessant praises.

20.

(g) Job, 15. 4.

13. If thou cast (g) not off fear , thou wilt not restrain prayer ; thou wilt be afraid to stay too long out of thy fathers sight , lest he frown ; and being convinced of thy weakness and inability to walk before him in all pleasing , thou wilt , without ceasing , (h) pray for grace and strength to do his will , and that thou may'st become fruitfull in every good work.

(h) Col. 1. 9.

30.

21.

And thus , 14. if thou be not a stranger to the initial and fundamental graces of humility and self-denial , thou must

must be sensible of thy wants, and that there is nothing at home but indigence and misery, and many sores and evils, and where shouldst thou go but to the rich treasure? there is (i) bread enough in thy fathers house, and wilt thou (i) Luk. 15 rather perish with hunger, then go to him and ask? he is ^{17.} able to (k) cure all thy sores and maladies, and wilt thou not run to this great Physician? Humility will not be ashamed to beg; nay, it is the most noble and heroick employment to beg from God, not only a (l) portion for (l) Joh. 3. 27. this bodily life, and his blessing with it, but that meat that endureth unto everlasting life: Did ever *Cesar* or *Alexander* contend for so noble a prize? and what honour and privilege is like to this, to be a supplicant and a favourite of the King of Kings, and to have access to him when we will, as our father and bountifull provisor?

15. Hast thou yet learned any thing of the noble art of spiritual prudence? art thou yet (m) *come to thy self*, and (m) Luk. 15. hast thou laid aside thy soul-deceiving and desperat folly? if thou hast but attained to the first elements of this Christian and heavenly art, it will send thee to trade where thou mayst gain most, and will drive thee from the empty cisterns, and lead thee to the full fountain, it will teach thee to go (n) Joh. 14. 13. to him who hath said, (n) *ask of me what ye will, it shall be given you*; wisdom hath long cryed to you worldlings, discovering your folly, and pointing out the remedy, *I/a.* 55. 1, 2, 3. ah! when will you hearken and obey? when will you be convinced of your folly, and learn to be wise?

16. Heaven, hell and earth may be our monitors, and set us a work; 1. wouldst thou yet stay a while in this poor and miserable Inn (perhaps that thou mightst do God more service in thy generation, or that thou mightst be better fitted and prepared for death, &c.) prayer may add to, and lengthen the lease of thy life (as it did *Hezekiah*, *I/sa.* 38. 1, 2, 5.) *Am.* 5. 15. But, 2. is hell terrible unto thee, and heaven thy joy and delight? art thou afraid of the day of judgment? and is it the one thing thy soul desires to be accounted worthy then, to stand before the Son of man? O!

then hearken to Christs counsel, *watch and pray alwayes*,
Luk. 21. 36.

We need not descend unto particulars, for what is that
lust thou wouldst have subdued? what is that grace thou
wouldst have strengthened? what is the judgment thou
wouldst have averted? or what rod or calamity removed?
what is the mercy, whether spiritual or temporal, yea,
what the comfort or consolation, though peace of consci-
ence, (that passeth all understanding) joy of the holy
Ghost, and assurance of thy salvation, &c. There is no evil
so terrible and astonishing, that the effectual fervent prayer
of the righteous may not remove; and no mercy so great
and excellent, that it cannot procure, by the blood of Christ,
pleaded at the throne of grace, *Mat. 7. 7. Job. 14. 13.*
14. &c. Here is a large field, where we might reap a plen-
tiful harvest, but we proceed, adding only one head more,
with its several branches.

We have heard how the Lord doth call and invite us, by
his Word and Works, by his commands, threatnings and
promises &c. by these the Lord points out our way to the
throne, and when we turn (o) either to the right hand or
to the left, we may hear the voice of some one or other mo-
nitor, saying, this is the way, walk ye in it: but though
there be so many who thus lift up their voice (p) like a trum-
pet, who cry aloud in our ears, and spare not; yet there
is one voice more, a (q) *powerfull voice, and full of majesty*,
and we would hear what it saith: and thus, 1. the Lord
absolutely considered; 2. relatively, and the several persons
of the blessed Trinity; and, 3. the attributes and divine
properties do call and invite us to the constant and serious
practice of this duty. And, 1. the great *Jehovah, who is,*
and beside whom there is (r) none else, the all-sufficient and
independent being, to whom our goodness and service (s)
cannot extend, nor any of his creatures be (t) profitable,
yet he calls for our prayers, 1. as a part of that homage we
owe to him; 2. by way of gratitude, and in testimony of
our love to him, and of his delight in us; then the Lord will
have us thereby to testify, 1. our reverence and subjection

(o) Isa. 30. 21.

(p) Isa. 58. 1.

(q) Pl. 19. 4.

24.
(r) Isa. 43. 11.

(s) Pl. 16. 2.

(t) Job. 22. 2.

Rom. 11. 35,
36.

to him; 2. our dependance on him; and, 3. our own indigence and his propriety, that we are beggars and hold all as an almes from heaven; and, 4. that we may thus be the more engaged to improve what we receive for his honour, and may be the more (*u*) ready to return to him the sacrifice of praise, &c. but not only, as his creatures, do we owe to him this point of duty and service, but also as his favourites, and by way of gratitude; 1. to testifie our love to him, and delight in him; if these be sincere, a communion with him in this most immediat part of his worship, must be sweet; when we may thus enter the Kings chambers, we will rejoyce and improve the importunity, *Cant.* 1. 4. *Cant.* 2. 4, 5. 2. He calls for our prayers to testifie his delight in us, and in our work; *O, my dove, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely, Cant.* 2. 14. Poor Saints are ready to complain, and say, I have no gifts nor parts, and am of no account in the world, and alas I can do no service to God in my generation; ah I if thou be poor, shouldst thou not beg? and though thou be weak, yet thou art not dumb, canst thou not then cry, and importune him who is able and willing to help and strengthen thee? thy prayers are good service to God, they are great and acceptable sacrifices; *the prayer of the righteous is his delight, Prov.* 15. 8. Yea, Pagans, by the light of nature, did come to the knowledge of this point; the divine moralist (*x*) *Plato* tells us, that the Athenians observing the gods always to favour the Lacedemonians more then them, resolved to consult their Idol *Ammon*, and to ask the reason hereof; especially since the Lacedemonians were careless what sacrifices and oblations they offered to God; and the Athenians did spare no cost, and were more frequent and sumptuous in their oblations then all the Grecians: To whom the Oracle, (or rather Sathan transforming himself into an Angel of light, to those whom he held fast in his snare, if that Author here relate a history, and do not (as is usual to him) alledge this passage in a parabolick way, and for the application) but the Oracle saith, he

(u) *It is a sure rule (saith Dr. Preston Saint exeri. serm. 1.) what we win with prayer, we wear with thankfulness.*

(x) *Plato som. 1. Alcibiad. 2. pag. (mibi) 237.*

- (y) Euphrates, i. e. (interpretate Ficinno) bona verba.
- (x) Albeit Plato, by way of dialogue, brings in Socrates, making this interpretation according to his usual manner; wherby Ficinno (in his life prefixed to his works) ascribeth to his modesty and gratitude toward his Master
- (a) Micah 6. 6. 8.
- (b) Phil. 4. 6.
- 25.
- (c) Ezek. 33. 11.
- (d) Hof. 12. 4.
- (e) Ezek. 33. 12.
- "gave this response, that the Lacedemonians good (y) words (which (x) Plato interpreteth to be nothing else but their prayers) did please God better then all the worship and costly offerings of the other Grecians: and then he proceedeth in the commendation of this spiritual exercise; and to show, that God looks more to the inward frame of the heart, then outward performances, though never so specious; and that it were blasphemous to make the holy Lord like a wicked usurer, and to think that he can be bribed to hearken to sinners, and grant their desires because of their hypocritical devotion and great oblation. I wish that Book called *Alcibiades 2. or, of a vow*, were translated in our and other languages, to the shame of many dead and formal Christians, that they might go to school and learn from a Pagan much sincerity, zeal and devotion. But thus we see, that both Scripture and natural reason teach us, that heart-devotion is the best, and the pouring out of the soul to God in prayer is more acceptable than any outward oblation; why then shouldst thou say, (a) *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?* hath he not shewed thee, O man! *What is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to walk humbly with thy God, (b) and in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make your requests known unto him.*
2. All the persons of the blessed Trinity do call and invite us; 1. the Father openeth his bowels to receive and embrace us; he holdeth forth the golden Scepter, and saith, come and fear not, ye may have access and acceptance; look not upon me as a sin-revenging God and as a consuming fire, unless ye stand at a distance, and will keep up the old controversie and enmity; *As I live, saith the (c) Lord, I delight not in your death, but rather that ye turn and live:* that ye would lay down your weapons and submit, that ye would accept the Kings pardon freely offered to you; that in stead of fighting against me, ye would, (d) *Jacob-like with tears and supplications, wrestle with me, till ye prevailed and got the blessing:* (e) *turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O self-destroying sinners?* And as for all true Israelites who

who have made their peace with God, what should discourage them? know ye not that *the Father himself loveth you*, and will refuse you nothing? *Joh. 16. 27. 23.*

3. The Son by his blood hath purchased to us this liberty and priviledge; he laid down his life, that we, who by nature were as far off as devils, might be brought near, and that our prayers and persons should be accepted, *Eph. 2. 13. 18. Eph. 3. 12. Rom. 5. 2. Job. 14. 6. &c.* We may then hearken to his voice crying and expostulating with us, [Ah! will ye so far undervalue my love? will ye suffer my blood to be shed in vain? shall I purchase such a priviledge for you at so dear a rate, and will ye not improve it? O come to the Father; come, I am the (f) way and shall be your guide, ye shall not mistake; I am the (g) door, ye shall not need to wait and knock long, ye shall get entrance, access and acceptance.] 26.

(f) Joh. 14 6.
(g) Joh. 10.
7-9.

4. The holy Ghost offereth his help; he stretcheth forth his hand to draw us, and saith, let nothing fear or discourage you: Ah! but saith the trembling sinner, I am foolish and ignorant, I am not for the Court, I know not what to say to the King; he would but mock me: nay, but saith the Spirit, come and I will be your mouth, I will teach you what to say, and make you ask according to his will, *Rom. 8. 27.* O! but will the sinner yet say, I am weak and cannot ascend so high; I am lazy, and am not for so high an employment; I am drowsie, and when at work in the Kings presence, am ready to fall asleep: Yet, saith the Spirit, fear not, only be willing and obedient, and I will help all thine infirmities; let all thy weakness and wants be upon me; I will quicken and strengthen thee; thou shalt not want tears and groanings which cannot be uttered, (and that is the eloquence which the Lord requires, and which alwayes prevaileth with him) *Rom. 8. 26. Ps. 51. 12.* Nay, how often hath the holy Spirit knock'd and called, while we were fast asleep and took little notice of his motions? Ah! how often have we thus resisted him? and when we run, he must prevent us and set us a work; he must draw on the conference, and say, (though we discern not his voice) *seek ye my face*, before we say, *thy face, Lord, we will seek*, *Ps. 27. 8.*

27.

Lastly,

Lastly, the Lords attributes do call and invite thee to draw nigh to him; 1. his *justice* and terrors, his anger and displeasure cry unto thee, O secure sinner [what dost thou mean? art thou stronger then the Almighty? wilt thou be able to bear his wrath? why dost thou not then come in, and humble thy self before him? why dost thou not present thy supplications unto him, least I tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver.] *P/. 50. 22, 23. P/. 2. 12.*

2. His *mercy* and tender bowels cry, [Behold me, behold me, I am ready to embrace thee; the fountain stands open, and thou may'st draw water, it will cost thee but a word; oh I call and cry mightily, and thou shalt taste its sweetness; O, lay hold on me, and make peace, and thou shalt make peace] */sa. 27. 5.*

3. His *patience* and forbearance do call to thee, Oh I [despise not thine own mercies any longer, dost thou not know that thy day is drawing to a close? that night is coming on, when thou wilt not be able to work? knowest thou not, that the riches of Gods goodness and long-suffering should lead thee to repentance? *Rom. 2. 4.* O, remember, that abused patience will, ere long, give place to sin-revenging justice; and thou canst not promise to thy self one dayes respite, this night, O fool, thy soul may be required of thee, *Luk. 12. 30.*]

4. His *omniscience* and *omni-presence* may be motive enough to set thee a work; now thy scruples and doubts are removed, thou needst not say, where shall I find the Lord? and will he hear when I call? for he filleth heaven and earth, he is every where, and from his presence thou canst not flye. *Jer. 23. 24. P/. 139. 7, 8. &c.* and all things are naked before him, he knows our very thoughts a far off, before they arise in the heart, and are known to our selves, *Hab. 4. 13. P/. 139. 2. &c.*

5. His *eternity* should make thee (as it did many Pagans who had not the light of the Scriptures, which thou mayst daily read) mind another life; ah! dost thou not know, that as the Lord liveth for ever, So he hath prepared for his honest supplicants (*b*) an undefiled and incorruptible inheritance

fance that fadeth not away? if it be not worth the asking, its worth nothing: Ah! what (*s*) fools are we who labour and toil, and spend our time and strength for perishing trifles? or (as *P/490* called them) dreams, and will not so much as once seriously and diligently seek the kingdom of God, and the eternal crown of righteousness?

6. His *omnipotence* and *fidelity* may allure and invite the most stubborn and unwilling to the frequent practise of this heavenly exercise; he hath promised, and he is able to do great things for his honest supplicants, will ye so far envy your own happiness as not to become one of those? all of us would be great and mighty, but alas! few take the right course; for only the praying Christian, is (*k*) *strengthens with all* (*l*) *might*; and thus in some sense may be called *Almighty*; all his strength is borrowed and dependent on the first fountain, but thus (though the world believe it not), he is very strong; nay, saith (*m*) *Chrysostom*, *there is nothing more strong and mighty than a praying soul*; prayer (saith (*n*) another) *beats a shadow of omnipotence in it*, it sets infinite power a work for fulfilling thy desires, and (*o*) maketh the Church (*p*) *terrible as an army with banners*: enemies at length will be forced to put to their seal to this truth, what ever success and prosperity they may meet with for a while; when the day of Gods power cometh, the Lord will send the rod of his strength out of *Zion*, and will rule in the midst of his enemies, *P/sal.*

110. 2, 3, 5, 6. It was said of zealous *Luther*, *potius quisquid voluit*; he could do what he would; but may not the same be said of every believer? doth not our blessed Lord say as much, while he promiseth, *to give to such whatsoever they shall ask in his name*, Joh. 14. 13, 14. he is cited by Chrysoſt. as

Joh. 16. 23. &c. But ah! who hath believed his report? the Author of who maketh not God a liar by distrustful this sure word of promise? ye will not take Gods word, therefore ye will not pray; ye will not rest on Gods bond, and therefore ye

(o) *Mr Sam. Clark in his examples, pag. (mibi) 504. reports that some Princes possessed they feared more the prayers of some Saints, than an army of twenty thousand men.* (p) *Cent.*

6. 4. 10.

(i) *Repetition*
(Plato scil.)
quidam sola
aterna esse vo-
ra temporalia
vero verifim-
ilia, & que
sensui appetit
aut times
nihil aliud ef-
se quam lem-
nia: itaq; hoc
omnis positus
esse contem-
nenda; & ut
malis vitentur
quibus ipseus
est mundus ad
aterna consu-
gendum. Max-
im. Fic. in ut.

33.
(k) *According*
to Pauls prop-
er. Col. 1. 2.

11.
(l) *Ey wöen*
Synagag.
(m) *Nihil est*
potentius.
Chrysoſt. as
he is cited by
the Author of
a curacy of pa-
cification,
pag. 17.
(n) *senk.* (o)
Jude 21.

books.

look on the promises as no great encouragements to holiness O, if this one word were soundly believed I though love to God or to our duty did not prevail with us, yet self-love would often send us to the throne; but you may as well question all the Scriptures, as any one word or portion of them; and this promise of audience (so often repeated to cure thy unbelief) must be more sure then all the bonds and evidences in the world; it being easier for heaven and earth to pass, then one jot or title of Gods Word to fail and not be fulfilled, *Luk. 16. 17., Mat. 5. 18.* Hence *Dauids* (q) confidence, *Pf. 46. though the earth were removed, &c. yet he would not fear.* Ah I wilt thou who art called

(q) Which
some call Lu-
thers Psalms,
because when
he met with
any trouble or
difficulty, he
ran to it as his
city of refuge,
and was not
disappointed.

(r) Isa. 55.

11.

(i) Jam. 2.

19.

(t) Heb. 10.

21.

(u) Whether
he did vent
this blasphemy
in his own
name, or ex-
pressing the
thoughts of
soe many, we
need not en-
quire; we
will not undertake his vindication who speaks nothing for him self. (x) Qui petit acci-
piet Jacobus Apostolus inquit: O si Jacobus Rex mihi dicat idem, *Whites Sermon*
on Dan. 9. 25. pag. 13.

a Christian, and who wouldst be reputed a believer, dis-
pute and debate, question or deny any part of the holy
Scriptures, while the devils believe, and give such a full
and firm assent to every word that (r) proceedeth out of
Gods mouth? (s) they believe and tremble, and wilt not
thou believe and rejoyce, believe and love, and draw nigh
to him in full (s) assurance of faith. Alwayes, ye who rest
in a state of unbelief, and who lodge and entertaing such
thoughts as ye will not be able to carry to hell with you, ye
who would say (if ye were not ashamed to speak out your
atheism and unbelief) what a (n) blasphemous Pamphleter
once said; (x) O (said he) if I had the Kings word instead of
Gods; and if King James would say what the Apostlo
James said; and would promise to give me whatsoever I
should ask; I should not be such a stranger at Court, as I
am in the sanctuary. I have (I say) to you, O blasphemous
Atheists (who thus undervalue the rich promises of God,
and will not be at the pains to plead them at the throne of
Grace, a sad message from the Lord, and a dreadfull prayer
against you, who will not pray for your selves; that the

Lord would pour out his fury and wrath upon you; that finding the efficacy of that imprecation, ye might once learn to believe that the effectual fervent (y) prayer of the righteous availeth much: the words are most terrible, and O! (y) Jam. 5. 16. if they were more pondered by secure Atheists; we shall only offer these four or five observations which deserve our serious meditation, and shall not now stay to (x) press this exhortation further: And, 1. it would be considered that this dreadfull imprecation is doubled, and set down in two several Scriptures, by two heavenly messengers, without any considerable variation, either in matter or words; viz. by the Psalmist (whether David or Asaph, its needless to enquire now) Ps. 79. 6. and by the Prophet Jeremiah, chap. 20. 25. And I may say (with (a) Joseph to Pharaoh concerning his dreams) that this threatening is doubled, because (a) Gen. 41. 32. it is established by God; and God will shortly bring it to pass, however mockers may slight this sad doom, and put it far from them. 2. It would be observed, that this threatening is not concerning some outward and temporal stroke and judgement, but concerning the fury and indignation of him who is of (b) terrible Majesty, the (c) power of whose wrath cannot be known till it be felt in hell. (b) Job. 37. 23. (c) Bl. 90. 11. 3. That they who call not upon God are classed, and put in one category with Heathens and Pagans; what ever be their Church-priviledges and outward profession, yet truly, and in Gods esteem, such Atheists are not better, but rather worse then Barbarians. 4. That it shall not excuse them, nor guard them from the stroke of Gods fury, that they are many, though they be kingdoms and families, though they be never so mighty and numerous, the Lords (d) right hand shall find them out, and shall make them as a fiery oven, and he will swallow them up in his wrath. (d) Pl. 21. 8, 9. 5. That this judgment is denounced prayer-ways; certainly the servants of God did not delight in their ruine, whom they were obliged to (e) honour and (f) love as men and brethren; but the Lord having commanded, they must obey; and must not only fore-tell (e) 1 Pet. 2. 17. (f) Gal. 3. 14.

- viction of those who should read their own names in that dreadful imprecation. But such as will not now cry to the (g) rock of salvation, and (h) seek his face while he may be found, shall ere it be long, cry to the mountains and rocks to destroy them, fall on them, and hide them from his face, Rev. 6-16. Now he lovingly inviteth you to draw nigh to him, and offers you the help of his Spirit, and ye will not come; but nill ye, will ye, in that day of his wrath, when ye shall not be (i) able to stand before him, ye shall be brought before his Tribunal to be judged, 2 Cor. 5. 10. such as in their life derided holiness, and said it was in vain to call upon God, will then say in vain, (with the foolish Virgins, Mat. 25. 11.) Lord, Lord, open to us. O! if thou wouldst know in this thy day the things that belong to thy peace, before they be hid from thine eyes, Luk. 19. 42.
- (i) Deut. 32.
15. 2 Sam. 21.
47. &c.
(h) 11. 55. 6.
(i) Rev. 6.
17.

Sect. 2.

- Objections answered, and this Queree considered, whether prayer may be said to move him with * whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*
- * Jam. 1. 17.

Dan. 9. 2, 3. *I Daniel understood the number of the years; — that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem; and I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, &c.*

JON. 3. 8, 9, 10. *Let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God — And God saw their works — and repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not.*

There be scarce any material question and case handled in this Treatise, from whence we could not gather some one or moe objections which might be here propounded, as,
1. *Obj.* I cannot pray, I know not what to ask as I ought.
Ans. See where our strength lyeth, and from whence help may be brought, *Part 1. chap. 9.*

2. *Obj.*
Ans.

3. *Obj.*

2 Obj. But I am dull and indisposed, and am not in a fit condition and frame of spirit to speak with God. *Ans.* How thou mayest maintain and recover a praying-disposition, see *Part 3. chap. 2.*

3 Obj. O I but the mercies I stand in need of are great; and second causes are far off, and I see little probability of success. *Ans.* See supports for strengthening thy faith, *Part 2. chap. 2. sect. 2.* and *Part 1.* from Christs intercession, *ch. 5. sect. 1.* and from Christs death, *chap. 8.*

4 Obj. Ah I but I fear lest I be an enemy, and the Lord prove a consuming fire, if I should draw nigh to him; and were it not better to stay away, then to cast my self in the fire? *Ans.* Whatever be thy fear, yet thou must draw nigh to him or perish; if thou wilt come in sincerity, there is hope, but other wise he will come against thee to tear thee in peeces: See thy duty vindicated, obstructions removed, and encouragements held forth, *Part. 1. chap 5. sect. 3.*

5 Obj. O I but I fear lest the day of grace and the acceptable time be past; and that it were in vain for me now to seek the Lord. *Ans.* Ye have this case discussed, and this plea removed here, *chap. 2. sect. 2.*

6 Obj. But I cannot call God Father, nor follow that copy Christ hath set down, and according to which every suppliant must frame his prayers, *Mat. 6. 9. Luk. 11. 2.* *Ans.* Either thou art a child of light walking in darkness, and thy case is propounded, *Part 3. chap. 1. sect. 1. page 560.* or, thou art yet in the bond of iniquity, but wouldst fain shake off those grievous fetters, and then I have spoken to thy case, *Part 1. chap. 5. sect. 3.* And now let me only tell thee, though God be not yet thy Father *reapse & a parte rei*, thou not being as yet begotten, born and regenerated by his Spirit; yet he is thy Father *voto ac desiderio*, (*& forsasse etiam decreto ac aterna electione*) as to the longing and desire of thy heart, (and perhaps as to his secret purpose and decree) otherwise, if thou dost not so much as desire to have such a Father, and to stand under the sweet relation of an obedient son, thou hast no (a) part nor lot in this matter; what hast thou to do to take his Covenant in thy

3 Obj.
Ans.

6 Obj.
Ans.

(a) A.C. 8. 11.

thy mouth? or to lay hold on any federal relation to him? *Pf.* 50. 16. But, if thou wish and desire, if that be the one thing thou wouldst ask, if thou wert put in *Solomons* case, *1 King.* 2. 5. what mayest thou not thus call him thy Father? thou hast a sort of claim by this thy desire, unto that high relation which the Lord will never challenge nor upbraid thee

(b) *2 Pet.* 2.
20, 21, 22.

(c) *Mat.* 9. 6.

for laying hold on it, unless thou forfeit that plea, by (b) returning, with the dog, to thy vomit; for, sincere wishes and (c) desires pass as current money in the Kingdom of Heaven.

But not to insist on particulars, which might here be multiplied, if that labour had not been prevented by handling them in their proper places, (neither could they have been there omitted, without much confusion and deficiency, and many needless repetitions here). There is one objection, which

(d) *1 Sam.* 10.
23.

7 *Obj.*

(e) *Job.* 21.

9. 14, 15.

Pf. 73. 7.

98 *Pl.* 44. 12.

98 *1 Cor.* 4.

13.

like (d) *Saul* among the people, is by head and shoulders higher then all the rest; and it is this, many have what their (e) hearts can desire and more, who yet make no conscience to call upon God, but *cast off fear, and restrain prayer before him*; and on the other hand, the Saints for the most part are (f) *killed all the day long, and are counted as sheep for the slaughter*: and are (g) *made as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things*: they ask, but receive not; they seek, but find not; they knock, but it is not opened unto them; what then doth prayer avail? and what truth is there in the many promises that are made to it? *Ans.* This

Ans.

is that mountain which blind *Atheists* cannot look over; this is the stumbling block on which they fall and cannot rise again, and which often hath proven a sore temptation, trial and exercise to the Saints; therefore we speak to it at so great length here, *chap.* 1. where we shew, 1. that prayer could not want an answer; 2. that no good thing was withheld from honest supplicants; and, 3. that no good thing was enjoyed but by prayer; and that the mercies of prayerless souls were cursed, and all the crosses of the godly were blessed, &c.

Obj.

We come now to the objections that belong to this place, and we shall only name these few; and, 1. some may object and say, the Lord knoweth what we stand in need of,

Mat.

Mat. 6. 32. wherefore should we then labour to make our requests (b) known to him by prayer? *Ans.* We do not pray to God that we might inform him of our wants; but that we may obtain a supply of our wants; though a father know what his son standeth in need of, yet he will have him to ask, that thereby he may testifie his subjection to, reverence of, and dependance on his father. You will say, but why then doth the Apostle exhort us to make our requests known to God? *Ans.* 1. with (i) Zanchius and Cajetan, that the Apostle speaks not there of simple knowledge, but of such a knowledge as importeth an approbation; and thus Christ in the day of judgment will say to hypocrites, and thus

Ans.
(b) Phil. 4. 6.

(i) Zanch in
Phi. 4. 6.
Cajet. *ibid.*

from me, I know ye not. And then the sense will be [let your requests be such, as that they may be accepted and approved of God; ask only such things as are lawfull and honest.] 2. Its (k) answered, that the Apostle there condemneth pharisaical boasting, as if he had said [let it suffice, that your requests are known to God; when ye pray, do not (like the Pharisees) sound a trumpet, Mat. 6. 5, 6.] But as to the present difficulty we would rather answer, 3. that the Apostle, by (l) making known, doth not hold forth any kind of information, but a simple representation and intimation of our requests to the all-seeing eye of God, from whom nothing can be hid, and thus to make known to God, importeth only a communication and laying out of our desires before the Lord: And the reason of that expression may be, 1. because such a communication and representation among men doth often bring along with it some light and information; 2. because on our part there is a readiness and willingness that God should know and search our hearts; but that the Lords omniscience is no discharge, nor discouragement to pray; but on the contrary a notable engagement and motive thereto, may appear from that conclusion which our blessed Lord immediately subjoyneth, Mat. 6. 33. (and whom shall we think to reason best? and whether shall we hearken to his inference, or to that which is held forth in the objection?) after he had told that our father knows our wants and need, he exhorteth us to (m) seek, and shows

(k) Apud
Zanch. *ibid.*

(l) Per τὴν
ὑπακοήν

(m) Querite
ore et opere;
precibus et
laboribus.

after

after what order and manner we should seek; the consideration of Gods infinit knowledge should strongly draw us in to him; ah! who would not come to him who knoweth who we are, what is our condition, and what would do us good, and who will hear us whensoever we call upon him? but what a comfortless work must it be for poor Pagans to run to their idols, who have eyes but see not, and ears but hear not, *Pf. 115. 5, 6, 8.*

Obj. 9.

(n) *Aur futurum est quod precaris, aut non futurum est, etiam si non susceperis vota fiet: Si non est futurum, etiam si susceperis vota, non fiet. Huic dilemmati respondit Seneca mediam inter ista exceptionem prateriri futurum (inquit) hoc est (sed si vota suscepta fuerint; &c.*

(o) — *Ita non est hoc contra futurum, sed ipsum quoque in suo est.*

But again, you will say, the Lord hath from all eternity appointed and determined what shall come to pass in time, what he will do unto, or bestow upon the children of men; and his purposes and decrees are unalterable; and therefore prayer must be to no purpose; it can neither be better nor worse with us, whether we pray or not, for Gods purpose *what ever it be*, must stand, *Job. 23. 13. Pf. 33. 11. Prov. 19. 21. Isa. 46. 10. Heb. 6. 17. &c.* The great moralist *Seneca* propounds the same objection in the name of those who pleaded for blind *fortune*, and an inevitable necessity in all sublunary events; thus [(n) what ye would pray for, is either to come to pass or not; if it be future, whether ye pray or not, it must be; and if it be not decreed and to come, thy prayers will not make it to be.] To which *dilemma* he answereth, that the third member (which is true) is left out; *viz. that it is so come so pass, if thou pray*; and so not to come to pass if thou pray not; and thus (saith (o) he) our prayers fall as well under fate and destiny as other events. Which answer being purged from the Pagan dialect, will serve our turn: we must not separate the end from the means, as if the one did not as well as the other, fall under the counsell and decree of God; and as if his purpose were not as infallible concerning the means, as concerning the end; concerning thy praying, as his giving what thou desirest. And this objection hath no other ground but these two most gross errors, *viz. 1. that the Lord in his eternal counsel hath decreed the end, but not the means; 2. that the Lord hath not appointed and fixed a connexion between the means and the end.* We will not so far digress as to show the absurdity of both those principles, but these being

being rejected as unworthy to be owned by any who professeth himself a Christian; yea, or to know the first principles of reason; the decrees of God are so far from discharging us of our duty, that they may be a notable encouragement thereto; and particularly as to prayer. Thus *Daniel* knowing, not only that the Lord had determined the time of *Israel's* captivity, but also what that time was, takes encouragement from thence to pray for the decreed mercy, *Dan.* 9. 2, 3, 16. &c. And though we had no particular revelation as to the event, yet when we consider the wisdom and unchangeableness of Gods counsell, we may very confidently go to the throne of grace, expecting that he (who hath appointed nothing in vain) having put a word in our mouth, will also fill our hands: and his decree being immutable, and he having appointed prayer to be a mean for obtaining what we stand in need of, and promised success thereto, we need not fear, lest he cause us (p) seek his face in vain. Why then should we vex our selves with unwarrantable and needless questions concerning Gods decrees? or ask whether he hath decreed to give or withhold such a mercy? Thou art beyond thy sphere, and wilt find no place to rest, so long as thou wanders in this wilderness; the decrees of God are a depth thou canst not fathom, *secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but he hath revealed to us our duty, that we may do all the words of his law, Deut.* 29. 29. Let us not then be anxious concerning events; the Lord knoweth what he will do, and what is best to be done to us and for us; but let us be *solicitous* concerning our duty, committing the success to him who will withhold no good thing from his honest servants, nor suffer one word of promise to wait its accomplishment; let us not then ask *what God will do?* but *what we should do?* and if nothing will satisfy our curiosity untill we be acquainted with Gods secrets, let us then take the right course; let us not thus begin at the wrong and uppermost end of the ladder, and descend, before we ascend; it were better and safer to learn from our way and work some thing of Gods purpose concerning us, then to enquire after our duty in the Lords secret decrees, which are no other-
ways

wayes revealed to us, but by his Word and Works. If then, 1. thou hast a promise; and, 2. if thou meet with strength for doing thy duty, thou may'st prophesie the event and success (without any hazard of being accounted an enthusiast) for thou may'st know, that what ever be the Lords decrees concerning the futuration of events, yet there is no decree which needs, 1. discourage thee who art in sincerity seeking his face; or which, 2. can (q) warrant thee to neglect the means, and say it were to no purpose to call upon God; neither, 3. is there any decree in God to crosse his promises, or to bind up his hands from fulfilling the desires of all them who call upon him in truth.

(q) Its observable, that a known decree did give no superfluities from prayer to Christ though a Son, for in that decree, Pl. 2. 6, 7. was included his kingdom, and that he should have the utmost ends of the earth for a possession, which notwithstanding must be asked by him, ver. 8.

(r) Jer. 4. 32.

But we like not the work, and any thing will serve for a plea and excuse to lye by: Ah! is it not lamentable, that such as scarce can speak sense, or to purpose in any other business, yet will argue with such subtilty, and prove such egregious sophisters for deceiving and ruining their own souls? certainly Sathan must have no small hand herein: and it doth not a little discover our natural enmity at holiness and the wayes of God, that we are so (r) wise to do evil, and to provide covers for hiding from our eyes the way of life; whileas otherwise we are foolish and ignorant, and have no knowledge to do good: Is it not strange to hear these persons talk of the decrees of God, who never yet seriously minded, and know little of their duty; and to bring a reason from the secret purpose of the most high for them to be idle, and neglect the means of salvation and to destroy their own souls? Ah! what do such fools mean? is not their soul of far more worth and excellency then their body, and the immortal crown of glory then their perishing trifles and worldly enjoyments? why do they not then first try those desperate conclusions upon these base and worthless things, before they put their soul and eternal happiness to such a venture and hazard? why do they not say, what needs us rise early and go to bed late at night, what needs us till and sow? &c. for if the Lord hath decreed to give us a large and plenteous harvest, it must be so, whether we be at so much pains and travel or no; and if the Lord hath determined to withhold the

encrease,

increase, our labour and pains will not do the turn: and why should we eat, drink, sleep? for if the Lord hath appointed us to live to such a time, we must live so long, whether we eat or not: and if he hath numbered our dayes, and the set time of our departure be at hand, our eating and drinking will not prolong our dayes; if any, upon this account, would labour to (r) dissuade us from using the means for our bodily life and accommodation in the world; we could tell them, that it is not for us to meddle with Gods decrees, but it becometh us to use the means, and to wait upon him (so some will speak who little mind his providence) for the success; and with what disdain would ye abominat and mock him who should in earnest reason thus? and yet upon this very ground ye will become careless and negligent in matters of soul concernment; as if it were in vain to take pains for eternal life, and to work out your own salvation.

But we may to far better purpose retort this argument, and draw an encouragment to duty from the immutability of Gods decrees, (as hath been already hinted at) and conclude, that if the Lord (who is unchangeable and immutable in his purposes) hath (f) appointed such and such

(r) I remember I have read (or heard) of one who was tainted with this damnable delusion, who falling sick, and sending for the Physician, met with this reply, to what purpose should I come? for if it be appointed that ye shall now

die, my coming will not add to your dayes; and if it be appointed that ye shall recover, whether I come or not, ye must convalesce and recover of this disease. To whom again he sent, inreating him notwithstanding to come: who coming, and the Lord blessing his pains with success, the man was convinced of his error, and became a penitent: and thus both his bodily and spiritual disease was healed and cured. (1) Aquinas meeting with this question after that he had rejected three erroneous opinions of some ancient Philosophers (which he had refused, 1 part, quæst. 22. art. 2. 34. & quæst. 115. art. 6. & quæst. 116. art. 3.) 1. that humane affairs are not governed by divine providence; 2. that all events come to pass by a fatal necessity; (both which make our prayers useless) and, 3. that the divine appointments was alterable, and might be changed by our prayers and devotion: having, I say, rejected these dangerous errors, he himself gives a very considerable and satisfactory answer. Ad hujus evidentiam considerandum est (inquit) quod ex divina providentia non solum disponitur qui effectus fiant, sed etiam ex quibus causis & quo ordine proveniant; Inter alias autem causas, sunt etiam actus humani; unde oportet homines agere, non ut per suos actus divinam dispositionem immutent, sed ut per actus suos impleant quosdam effectus secundum ordinem a Deo dispositum; & simile est de oratione, non enim propter hoc oramus, ut divinam dispositionem immutemus, sed ut id impetremus quod Deus disposuit per orationes esse implendum. Thom. 2. 2. quæst. 83. art. 2. in corp. Si queratur an posita fundamento erroneo, scilicet omnia fatali necessitate evenire, Deumque ex necessitate naturæ agere, recte insulcrimus orationem fore inutilem, vid. Suarez, de orat. lib. 1. cap. 6. & Franc. Vener. de harmonia... mundi caus. 1. tom. 1. cap. 16.

means for obtaining such and such ends, and hath fixed such an order and connexion between the means and the end; if he, I say, enable us to do our duty, and if we prove so wise as to follow the right way, and use the means; we may be confident of the success, and that our labour shall not be in vain.

Obj. 10.
Ans.

But it may yet be objected, that the Lord having freely promised to give what we stand in need of, and to withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly, Ps. 83.

11. &c. it seemeth needless to interpose our prayers and requests. *Ans.* Albeit the promises be altogether free, yet

the Lord calls for our prayers as a part of that worship we owe to him; to testify our dependance on him; and to show his delight in prayer; that we may be fitted to receive, and the more engaged to improve aright what he giveth; and to return to him the sacrifice of praise: nay, the Lord thereby not only procures our good, (O! what an effectual

mean is fervent prayer to take the heart off the world, to strengthen our faith, enflame our love, &c.) but provides for our honour also: *Ob* (saith (1) *Chrysostom*) consider,

O man! what honour and happiness is conferred on thee while thou art admitted familiarly to converse with God and Christ, to propound what thou wilt, and to ask whatsoever thou desirest. O! how would we prize such familiarity

with an earthly King? and what an honour and high favour would we esteem it? but while we are allowed and invited

to this liberty with the King of Kings, how do we undervalue that admirable mercy and priviledge? and as this heavenly employment of it self is so honourable and excellent, So usually it brings with it much beauty to him who

is employed in it; then the Lord manifests his glory to the soul, and lets it enjoy, as it were, a heaven upon earth,

then the (u) honey and the honey-comb is set before thee, and thou art invited to eat; *the soul* (saith (x) one) *of a praying Saint is sometimes in a sort transfigured, and shineth as Christs body on mount Tabor.* Ah! from whence

should heat and light come, if not from the Sun? it is no wonder then though such as hide and cover themselves from

its

(1) *Considera quanta est tibi concessa felicitas, quanta gloria attributa, orationibus famulari cum Deo, cum Christo miscere colloquia, optare quod velis, quod desideras postulare.* Chrysost. apud Thom. art. cit. ad 3.

(u) Cant. 5.
1. (x) Mr. Hodge apolog. for the Lords prayer, pag. 35.

ts beams; (7) *walk in darkness, and sit in the cold region and shadow of death.* (y) Mat. 4. 16.

But though thus we be obliged to pray, though the honour of our Master and our own good, do call for diligence herein; yet is the promise no less free than if there were no such condition required on our part; our prayers are not our money, nor a price for what we receive: will any man think that we give not freely to these beggars, who importunately cry at our doors? and yet there is here some sort of debt and obligation lying on us to pity those who are in misery; but there is no obligation lying upon the Almighty to hear us when we cry: nay, were it not that the promises are altogether free, notwithstanding of any condition to be performed by us, or any qualification required on our part, it were in vain for us to pray, or go about any duty, looking to the rich recompence and reward which the promise holds forth; since though we did all we can (yea though we could perfectly obey all the Commands) yet are but unprofitable servants, Luk. 17. 10. when we pay our debt, we do not

(2) oblige the creditor to bestow new favours on us: but ah! how defective and imperfect are our best performances? Isa. 64. 6. I grant, that among men, there may be so much trouble and travel in seeking and waiting on, that an answer may be too dear cost by the supplicant; and yet even thus thy supplication doth not profit him to whom thou makest thy address; far less can our prayers and service extend to the Lord, Ps. 16. 2. *if thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he off thine hand?* Job. 35. 7.

Lastly, it may be objected, that the father himself loveth us, and what need we then ask any thing from him? his love will cry and prevail, though we were silent; and thus our blessed Lord tells his disciples, that upon this very account, viz. because the father loved them he would not, he

(2) This truth hath exerted a notable consequence from the Gospel of Salmeron in several particulars, which may serve as so many irrefragable arguments against the popish doctrine concerning merits and supererogation, primum quod

servi sumus, &c. Vid. loci Salmer. in evang. Tom. 7. de parabol. 17a. et 30. pag. 190. vid. etiam variationes quibus ibidem probatur non Deo esse imitiles.

(3) Et sic verum est verum illud Seneca, nulla re carius emitur, quam quæ precibus emptæ. Obj. 11.

needed not pray for them, *Job. 16. 26, 27.* And upon this same ground we may further argue thus, thou art, O man, either a reprobate, and an object of Gods hatred, and certainly thy prayers cannot prevail, for thou not being in Christ, canst not obtain access, *Eph. 2. 18. Eph. 3. 12.* or else thou art one of his elect and precious ones, and to what purpose wouldst thou pray? wouldst thou move his bowels, and have them turned towards thee; that is already done, the Father loveth thee, and is more ready to give, then thou to receive; and if he were not, could thy prayers move and change him? *Ans.* The Lords love is so far from

Ans.

(b) *Neque enim removens preces nostras differt: sed hac arte sedulo nos efficiens ad semetipsum attrahere vult: nam & pater quavis benignus, cum a puero rogatus admittit, quasi non volens idcirco non ut neglet, sed ut ille ardentius petat, & sibi magis concilietur.* Christ.

giving a discharge from prayer, that upon this very account he calls for our prayers, *Can. 3. 14.* because the Lord loveth us, therefore he delighteth in our prayers, *Prov. 15. 8.* compared with, *ver. 9.* as a tender (b) father, because he loveth his child, will have him come and ask; the sons presence and voice is sweet to him, and therefore he will not at the first haply give him, but lets him stay and renew his request, and add pleas and arguments; and therefore though our asking be not the true and proper cause (albeit it be a mean which his wisdom and love hath made choyce of) why he giveth, yet he will have us ask as for other reasons, (some of which were hinted at in answer to the foregoing objection) so especially because he loveth us; neither the Lords promise nor purpose to give, nor his love and fatherly affection toward us, can hinder the Lord from saying to us, (in reference to all our mercies, what he said to his ancient people, *Exod. 36. 37.* concerning the mercies there promised) *I will yet for them be inquired of by my people, so do for him.* It is true, the Lord often (*) prevent us with his mercies, *Isa. 63. 24.* but not to take us off, but the *Job. 14. 13.* more to engage and encourage us to pray and praise him.

(c) *It is heard the Father.* Toler.

As to the place, *Job. 16. 26, 27.* Christ doth not there deny that he will pray for them, that being contrary both

selling, that the pring and principal matter; both to man and grace, are precious to our asking, part. 1. chap. 8. pag. 317. with whom Salmeron journeyed, tom. 4. in evangel. tract. 45. in hac verba, scit enim pater vester quid opus sit vobis antequam petatis.

to his promise and practice; but he would there lead his disciples in to the fountain and principal cause of all their mercies, *viz.* the eternal love and free grace of God, which did put a difference between them and others, from which fountain, through his blood, all our mercies do flow; so that not only our weak and imperfect prayers, but also his most effectual and powerfull intercession is but a mean for obtaining and conveying to us those mercies, which our gracious Father, of his meer good pleasure and love in Christ Jesus, hath appointed and prepared for us from all eternity; as we have shown at length, and vindicated this place, *Part 1. Chap. 5. Sect. 1. Pag. 68.* Christs scope there is not to exclude his intercession, but to prefer the Fathers love and his death, and to prevent that mistake that is incident to mourning sinners, ah! (think they) Christ is mercifull and tender-hearted toward sinners, (else he would not have shed his precious blood for them) but we are afraid lest God prove a consuming fire to us, and pursue us with his justice: O, but saith our blessed Lord, I would not have you (even after your eyes are opened to see my love in laying down my life for you, and going to heaven to prepare a place and to intercede for you) so to look on my death and intercession, and my kindness toward you thus sealed and manifested by such convincing demonstrations, as to exclude the father and to imagine that he hated you, and were unwilling to do you good, for (saith he) *the father himself loveth you*: And though I did not intercede for you, yet having elected you to obtain salvation through my blood, he would show mercy on you no less then on your forefathers, who had not the benefit of my intercession: the love of the Father is the first fountain of all our mercies, for though we were elected in Christ, yet the free love of God (who is Father, Son and holy Ghost) in order did preceed every thing that can fall under the notion and consideration of a mean; hence its said, that *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, &c. Job. 3. 16. 1 Job. 4. 9, 10.*

(d) *Its objection is that all the objections here, may be (as we have shown) made use of as so many arguments and motives, to encourage us in going about this duty: where can we then look, and not see some one or other motive and encouragement? since all that can be alleged by devils or men against this work, may serve as a mean to stir us up to the diligent performance of it.*

(ebls. 30. 18.
(f) 1 Chron.
4. 10.

And now we may (d) retort this and the preceding objection, which are so far from holding forth a discharge from, and discouragement to pray, that in both we have a notable encouragement and engagement to this duty; ah! what can more sweetly and strongly draw a poor indigent sinner to the rich treasure, then the cords of the free promises? and where is there such a cordial for a fainting soul, that dare not look up to the throne of grace, as the consideration of Gods mercy and fatherly love toward us in Christ? and what madness must it then be to make these become a heavy burden, and so many weights to press us down while we would lift up our hearts to the Lord, and to make those healing medicines become deadly poyson to us? Ah! had not the Lord prevented us with his free love and gracious promises in Christ, what warrant had we more nor devils to draw nigh to God? but now having such a loving Father, such gracious Promises, and so great a Mediator and Advocat, we may *come with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*, Eph. 3. 11, 12, Eph. 1. 13. Act. 26. 6, 7. 1 Joh. 3. 1. and 4. 10. 2. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Heb. 4. 16. &c.

As to the question, whether we intended by our prayers to move God? its commonly answered (and but briefly and in a word) that prayer works a change in us, but not in God, who of himself is willing to give, if we were ready to receive; he (e) *waits only that he may be gracious, and (f) bless us indeed*, and prayer enlargeth the heart, and those pleas and arguments we use in prayer do serve to strengthen our faith, and to beget such a holy, humble and confident frame of spirit, as the promise of audience doth require; and which will be ready to receive mercie aright, and to improve them to the honour of the Giver: and thus prayer is that rope, whereby

(as the Jesuit (g) *Salmeron* from the supposed *Dionysius* faith) we pull our vessel to the rock, but not the rock to us.

(q) *We do the rather take notice of this allusion, as being owned by a Jesuit, who otherwise teaches according to the principles of the pelagian school) that God will (concurfus scil. in actu primo, seu voluntas qua Deus statuit cum causis secundis concurrere, &c.) is determinable by the will of the creature, to this or that effect. Est ergo (inquit) oratio quemadmodum magnus ait Dionysius de div. nominib. cap. 3. veluti catena aurea è celo demissa, per quam qui ascendunt, videntur quidem catenam ad se trahere, sed revera ipsi potius ab ea trahuntur in*

But albeit upon the matter this be a truth, yet not a satisfactory answer to the question; for clearing of which, we would offer these few considerations; 1. it cannot be denied, that as the exercise of every grace is a mean for the growth and strengthening of it, and quickning the heart for for a communion with God, So in a speciall manner, that spiritual and heavenly exercise whereby in a solemn way we have access to, and (h) fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, doth not a little contribute for that end, *Eph. 6. 10.* compared with, *ver. 18.* in prayer not one but several graces are exercised; and therefore, &c.

2. Its no less certain, that our prayers cannot change him, *with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning, Jam. 1. 17.* for *he is in one mind, and who can turn him?* *Job, 23. 13.*

But yet, 3. prayer is a mean appointed by him for obtaining whatsoever we stand in need of, *Mat. 7. 7.* &c. So that we may as (yea more) confidently expect a return to our prayers, as the husband-man the harvest after his plowing and sowing; and albeit the men of this world who live by sense, but are strangers to the noble life of faith, can sow in hope but not pray in hope; yet the generation of the faithful, who have learned to trust Gods Word, know that it is surer then the seasons of the year, or the word of natural causes promising success to their labours; and that though the season should dis-appoint the sower, and the most refined gold be turned to dross, yet the word of God will abide firm and sure for ever, *2 Pet. 1. 23, 25. Ps. 12. 6. Ps. 46. 2.* &c. and therefore such will rather forget to eat their bread, and neglect the most necessary labour and employment, then forbear to plead the promises at the throne of grace; nay, a most cruel decree and threatening

could

caelum; & dum precamur Deum, non ipse sit aptior & paratior ad nos audiendos, sed nos capiendis illius beneficiis preparatiores. *Salm. in evang. tom. 3. tract. 45. prope finem, vid. etiam Toletum in Joan. cap. 16. 26, 27. bbb. 1 Job. 1. 3.*

could not with-hold *Daniel* a for some few dayes from the throne, but he must pray, and so oft a day, though he should be cast into the Lyons den, *Dan.* 6. 7, 10.

Yet, 4. though prayer be such a successfull and never-lying mean, though it be like the fruitfull womb that never miscarrieth, and the full breasts that alwayes yield milk, yet we need not enquire after its vertue and excellency, as if of it self it had any proportion with, or efficacy for, producing such great effects; for, 1. its nothing like natural causes which work by their strength and activiry; neither, 2. hath prayer any morall causality by way of merit and deserving; ah! what worth and excellency can there be in it as it is our empty performance, having much dross and imperfection cleaving to it? but all its efficacy flows, 1. from Gods ordinance and appointment; he hath appointed it not only to be *medium cultus*, but also *medium impetrationis*; not only to be a means of worship, but also a channel for conveying to us all the mercy and goodness the Lord hath promised; what ever hath the stamp of heaven on it, must be currant money, whatever the metall otherwise be; and thus in baptism we look over the element, unto the ordinance of God, and from thence expect the blessing; and thus the weak hand of prayer can bring home abundance of provision. 2. From the covenant and free promises of God, which, by prayer, we plead at the throne of grace; prayer layeth hold on Gods truth and fidelity, and therefore cannot be sent away empty; and as the promises are the foundation and ground whereon prayer is built, So prayer is an object of the promise, the Lord hath once and again given his Word concerning its success and prevalency; and he will fulfill that Word. 3. From our relation to God as a father, which, being pleaded in prayer, must prevail; *that one Word* father (said noble (i) *Luther*) *coming from the heart of a son, exceeds the eloquence of Demosthenes, Cicero, and all the famous Orators in the world.* 4. From Gods love to us, and delight in us and our prayers. 5. From the interest his Spirit hath in prayer, it being his work rather then ours. 6. From Christs blood, the altar whereon we offer this
Spiritual

(i) *Vocula*
Pater dicta in
corde, est elo-
quentia quam
Demosthe-
nes Cicero,
& eloquen-
tissimi in
mundo mun-
quam possunt
exprimere.

Spiritual sacrifice, and the price laid down for all our mercies.

7. From Christs intercession and concurring with us, &c.
See Part 2. chap. 2. sect. 2.

Hence, 5. albeit the Almighty hath no delight in our prayers and performances upon the account of gain and advantage to his all-sufficient Majesty, Job 22. 3. Job 35. 7, 8. yet he not only accepteth, but also delighteth in the prayer of the righteous, as a part of that homage we owe to him, and as a mean whereby he may communicat himself and do good to his children, Pro. 15. 8. He (f) delighteth in mercy, and there- (f) Micah 7.
fore also in every mean whereby, and occasion wherein, he 18.
may exercise this most glorious Attribute.

Hence, 7. since the Lord delighteth in, and accepteth our prayers as means. he hath appointed for deriving the blessing to us, since they alwayes prevail and meet with a gracious answer, we may well say, that they move the Lord to shew mercy upon us and do us good; for albeit in some cases, *de Deo etiam vera dicere periculosum sit*, as *Austin* once said, yet there is no hazard to speak with the Scriptures, and what is there clearly held forth; and do we not there read of the moving and sounding of Gods bowels? Isa. 63. 15. Jer. 31. 20. of his returning and repenting of the evil he had threatned, and leaving a blessing where he had begun to smite and curse, Joel. 2. 13, 14. &c. And particularly as to prayer, is it not written, that, after *Ninveh* had cryed mightily unto God, he turned and repented of the evil he had said he would do, and did it not? Jon. 3. 10. And doth he not promise the same to every nation and person that turneth at his threatening? Jer. 18. 8. Ezek. 33. 14. &c. And how often do the servants of God pray that he would turn from his fierce anger, and would turn to them? as, Ps. 25. 16. Ps. 60. 1. Ps. 63. 16. Ps. 86. 16. &c. And did not *Moses* stand in the breach to turn away Gods wrath from his people? Ps. 106. 23. And is it not said of *Jacob*, that he had power over the great Angel of the Covenant, and (s) prevailed and got the victory? Gen. 32. 26. May we not from these Scriptures, and particularly from what is reported of *Jacobs* wrestling conclude, that the more zeal and tenderness, the more faith- (t) Vid. Calv. in loc.

and confidence we express in prayer, the more strongly and feelingly we plead, the more arguments and motives we press from his Word, the more we shall prevail, and that the more we are moved and affected while we pray, the more we do move and prevail with God? And I think strange that any should scruple to yield to this: but for preventing a mistake, it would be considered, that it were absurd to imagine that the Lord could be moved or turned from his eternal purpose and decree; thus there is (u) *no variableness with God, neither shadow of turning*; but the Lord is said to be moved by prayer, 1. because he delighteth in it, and turneth from his anger and wrath against the supplicant; and, 2. because he changeth his work and dispensation, removing rods and judgements, and bestowing mercies in stead of these; and thus prayer as his own Ordinance, through the promise in Christ, moveth him and prevaileth with him.

Thus, 8. it would be observed, that though turning, repentance, &c. be only improperly and metaphorically attributed to him in whom there is no shadow of change; yet there is ground for such an expression; 1. because he doth those things which creatures that are mutable do, when they are under these passions; so that the (x) change is rather in Gods work and dispensations, then in his will and affections: 2. because what useth to stir up these passions in men, in whom are some reliicks of the Image of God, such grounds and motives have place here: and therefore, 3. if the Lord were capable of such affections, it might be supposed that these would beget them in him. Hence we may conclude, that since there is some sort of motive and occasion, and some effects and consequents of such passions as they are in men; that something metaphorically and analogically may be ascribed to God, removing all creature-imperfections from him, in whom every thing, to our weak capacity and apprehension, is a mystery: and therefore, if any will further ask what Gods turning and repenting doth formally, properly and in it self import? We can say no more, but negatively,

(u) *Potius in
divino effectu
quam affectu.*

that it cannot (7) import any proper change and alteration in his will or knowledge; for his knowledge is infinite and can admit no addition, and his decrees fixed and immutable, and can admit no alteration; *Known to the Lord are all his Works from the beginning of the World*, Act. 15. 18. and *his purpose and counsel must stand*, Prov. 19. 21. We must not then imagine, that any thing falls out beyond his expectation, or contrary to his eternal counsel and purpose, or without his effectual providence: he did appoint and fore-know, and in due time did stir us up, and by his Spirit assist us, to pour out such prayers as should prevail with him, and which he would accept, hear and answer; and therefore, there can be no alteration nor change in him, since all things come to pass according to his eternal fore-knowledge, appointment and immutable decree: yet notwithstanding, since, 1. he altereth his dispensations by those means he hath appointed for that end; and, 2. since he is affected towards men and their ways, according as he hath revealed himself in his Word; the wicked and their way being an abomination to him, and the righteous and their performances his delight; we may safely with the Scriptures say, that the prayers of the

(7) *Respondeo A. u-*
gustin. de tri-
nit. lib. 5. cap.
16. Si Domi-
nus non dici-
tur, nisi cum
jam incipit ha-
bere seruum,
etiam ipsa ap-
pellatio relati-
va ex tempora
est Deo...certo
ut tuus Domi-
nus esses, aus
meus, qui mo-
do esse capi-
mus, ex temp-
ore accidit Deo
...quomodo igit-
ur obincedi-
mus nihil se-
cundum acci-
dens dici De-
um, nisi quia
ipsius natura
nihil accidit

quo mutetur, ut ea sunt accidentia relativa, qua cum aliqua mutatione rerum de quibus dicuntur, accidunt; sicut, &c. quanto facilius de illa incommunicabili Dei substantia debemus accipere, ut ita dicatur relative aliquid ad creaturam, ut quamvis temporaliter incipiat dici, non tamen ipse substantia Dei accidisse aliquid intelligatur sed illi creaturae ad quam dicitur.— Sic & Pater noster esse incipit cum per ejus gratiam regeneramur, quoniam dedit nobis potestatem filios Dei fieri: substantia itaque nostra mutatur in melius, cum filii ejus efficiamur, simul & ille Pater noster esse incipit, sed nulla commutatione sua substantia. Quod ergo temporaliter dici incipit Deus, quod aut ea non dicebatur manifestum est relative dici, non tamen secundum accidens Dei, quod ei aliquid acciderit, sed plane secundum accidens ejus ad quod dicit aliquid Deum incipit relative; & quod antequam Dei justus esse incipit, ipse mutatur, Deus autem absque temporaliter aliquando diligit, quasi nova dilectione qua in illo ante non erat, apud quem nec praeterita transferunt, & futura jam facta sunt. Itaque omnes Sanctos suos ante mundi constitutionem dilexit, sicut praedestinavit; sed cum convertuntur & inveniunt illum, tunc incipere ab eo diligere dicuntur, ut eo modo dicatur quo potest humano affectu capi quod dicitur. Sic etiam cum iratus malis dicitur, & placidus bonis, illi mutantur, non ipse. Sicut Lux, &c. vid. loc.

(2.) *Oratio est voluntaria nostra religiosa representatio coram Deo, ut illo Deum quasi afficiatur, (med. theol. lib. 2. cap. 6.) & ad illum quasi commo- vendum, Cal. Consci. a. lib. 4. cap. 14.*

(a) *Generalis finis orationis est, ut Deum quasi afficiamus aut commoveamus: unde est quod fideles dicuntur precibus quasi potentia valere acut Deum, Gen. 32. 28. Hof. 12. 4. 5. & quasi certare, Rom. 15. 30. med. lib. 2. cap. 9. § 18. in eo differat oratio ab auditione verbi, quod ibi moveatur voluntas nostra in Deum ut nos ab ipso commoveamur: sed hic terminus motus immediatus est ipse Deus, ut ipse afficiatur nostris desideriis, Cal. Consci. lib. 4. cap. 14. § 2. Sic Deo visum est orationis vim & efficiaciam nobis commendare, ut eadem se affici & quasi commoveri doceret — Et qui aliquid à Deo precantur, dicuntur subsidariam operam conferre ad illud efficiendum, 2 Cor. 1. 11. med. cap. cit. § 19.*

righteous prevail, and have power with him, affect, and, as it were, move him. Hence the judicious Dr. Ames doth well describe prayer to be a religious offering up of our desires to God, that he may thereby (as it were) be moved and affected. And hence (saith (a) he) the Saints are said to strive and have power with God, and to help and concur for the doing and effectuating what they ask; and as in hearing the word our will is moved toward God, so by prayer Gods will is moved towards us. And why should any scruple to say, that prayer moveth the Lord to shew mercy upon us, who are not, and need not be afraid to say, that the Lord is provoked to anger by, and moved to punish the wicked for, sin? What though our sins deserve punishment? but our prayers are not meritorious sacrifices; yet that difference is altogether impertinent, in order to the present case concerning Gods immutability, which notwithstanding, as it is commonly said that sin doth move and provoke the Lord to wrath, why may it not also be said, that the prayer of the righteous doth move and prevail with him to shew mercy? for, as if man had not sinned, the Lord would not have been angry against him nor inflicted any punishment; So if the Saints did not pray, they should not receive mercies from him, but would provoke him to wrath, and to afflict them; but their prayers are his delight, and a means to obtain what they stand in need of; and therefore, in some sort, they must (as it were) move and affect him.

Thus objections being answered, and obstructions removed, thou mayest be convinced, O man! that there is no hindrance nor impediment lying in thy way, but what carnal reason would suggest to hinder & discourage thee; if thine eyes were

opened,

opened, thou mightest (b) discern some motive and encouragement from thence for going about thy duty : and if objections do furnish arguments and motives, where can we cast our eyes and not behold some one or other motive and encouragement ? We will not resume the several particulars mentioned, *See* 1. only let me now, by way of conclusion, warn thee, that unless thou be a sincere supplicant, thou canst not glorifie God nor enjoy him for ever ; thou canst not serve God, nor work out thine own salvation ; which being joyned together, (as they cannot be separated) are our great business here in the world, and the one thing necessary. If thou callest not upon God, thou art a thief and a robber, in raking and using his goods without his leave ; and sayest with those wretches, *Pf. 12. 4. Who is Lord over us ?* thou dost not acknowledge his propriety in all thou possessest, nor thy dependance on him, and subjection to him ; thou lookest not upon thy mercies as talents, and dost not resolve to improve them for the Masters use, nor render to him the sacrifice of praise for what he hath intrusted thee with ; the thief useth not to come and render thanks to the owner for what he steales from him : if thou cast off prayer thou drawest down wrath, and openest the door that Gods judgements may enter in ; and every business thou puttest thine hand unto, and every mercy thou enjoyest, cryeth (while thou art silent) to the heavens for a curse and plague to be poured out upon thee, for (c) subjecting it to vanity, (c) *Rom. 8. 10, 11, 12.* and imploying it against it's Maker ; nay, if thou dost not call upon God, thou art a very Atheist, and profess what thou wilt, thou art in one clais and rank with the heathen that know not God, and with them lying under the same curse and imprecation. *Pf. 79. 6. Jer. 10. 25.* We read of some desperat fools and mad atheists, who said in their hearts, *there is no God*, *Pf. 14. 1. Pf. 53. 1.* but what is their mark and that character whereby they may be known ? in both Scriptures they are described to be men that *call not upon God*, *Pfal. 14. 4. Psal. 53. 4.* As if the holy Spirit had said, would ye indeed know who is the heart-Atheist ? [he is one who will not seek after God ; who casteth off fear and restrain-

(b) See how we restored the several objections belonging to this place.

eth prayer; God is not in all his thoughts.] All prayerless souls are bigg with blasphemies; whatever restraint be upon their mouths, yet their way and course doth say, (and a little temptation might make them speak out) with those cursed ones, *Job. 21. 15. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?* Such as have no prayers, have no creed; and such as leave Gods door, are ready, with (d) *Saul*, to run to the devils. O! then wouldst thou not have the throne of mercy become a throne of wrath and indignation unto thee? wouldst thou not have him whose judgment is true, account thee an Atheist? wouldst thou not become a prey to every temptation that would drive thee to destruction, and make thee in the day of distress to run to *Sathan*, thy sworn enemy and soul-murderer; cast out this dumb devil, let him not possess thy heart any longer, else he will be thy guine and damnation. But on the other hand, wouldst thou be happy here, and eternally hereafter? wouldst thou (e) have fellowship with the Father and with his Son *Jesus Christ*? wouldst thou (f) have power with God? wouldst thou have moyen in heaven, and have the Kings ear? wouldst thou have it said unto thee (as to her, *Mat. 15. 28.*) *be it unto thee as thou wilt*, though thou shouldst ask not (as (g) *Herod* once vainly proffered) the half of a kingdom only, but the whole; and not a corruptible inheritance, but a crown of glory that fadeth not away? wouldst thou be in such a blessed and happy condition? O, then hearken to the exhortation, *Col. 4. 2. Rom. 12. 12. Eph. 6. 18. continue instant in prayer, watching thereunto with all perseverance.*

And now let me, with dying (h) *Moses*, call heaven and earth to record against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life; ah! will ye delay, or refuse; is there any question or difficulty in the matter? is there any comparison between life and death; cursing and blessing; eternal happiness and everlasting woe and misery? were it not that sinners are (i) bewitched, befooled, and infatuated by *Sathan*; would they (k) prefer

(d) 1 Sam.
28. 7.

(e) 1 Job. 1. 3;
(f) Hof. 12.
3. 4.

(g) Mark,
6. 23.

(h) Deut. 30.
15. 19.

(i) Gal.
3. 1.

(k) prefer darkness to light, and (l) forsake the fountain of living waters, and hew out to themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water? Oh! (m) turn ye, turn ye, foolish self-destroying sinners; why will ye die, while life is offered unto you, and all that may make you happy and blessed for ever? doth not the Lord to day hold out all his treasures unto thee; and invite thee to (n) buy at an easie rate? do but ask, ask what thou wilt, and it shall be (o) given thee. O! (p) if thou didst know, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, before they be hid from thine eyes. Ere it be long, this day of grace and acceptable time will be past; and if then thou be found among the number of despisers, thou wilt (but too late) be convinced of thy folly in contemning thine own mercies; that thou wouldst not be (q) rich, thou wouldst not be (r) honourable, and (s) happy, that thou didst despise a crown, and wouldst not be a (t) King and Priest unto God for ever and ever: (u) Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish, 41.

(k) Isa. 9. 10.

(l) Jer. 2. 13.

(m) Exek.

33. 11.

(n) Rev. 3. 18.

(o) Mat. 7. 7.

Joh. 14. 13, 14.

&c.

(p) Luk. 19

42.

(q) Rev. 3. 18.

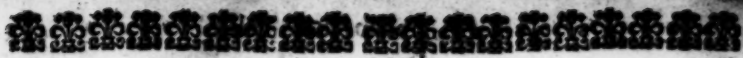
(r) Pl. 16. 3.

(s) Pl. 12. 1, 5.

(t) Rev. 1. 6.

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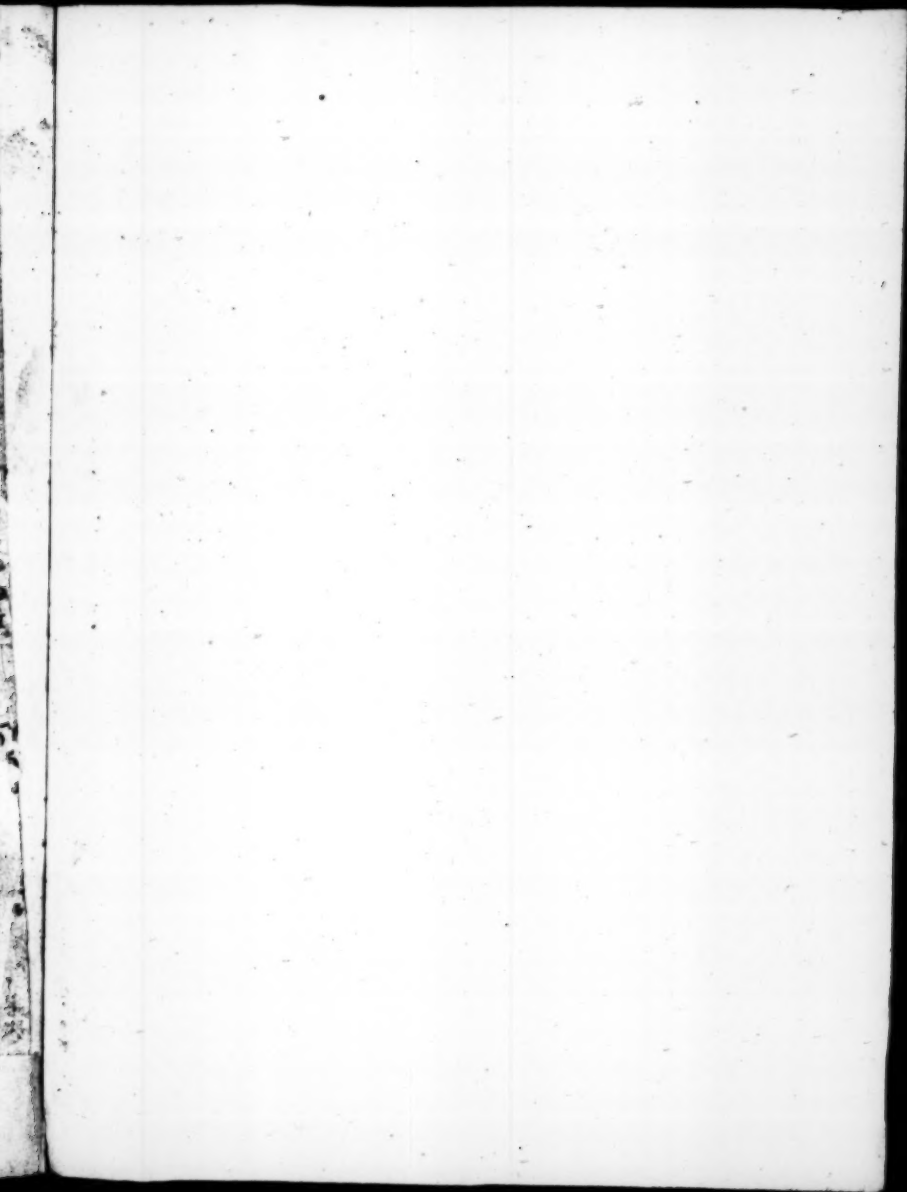
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3. The infinit power and omnipotent arm of God; we ask from him who can do exceeding abundantly above all we can think or ask, *Eph.* 3. 20. The poor creature may be kind, willing and ready to help, but it is weak and unable; but as our God is incomparably more kind, tender and affectionar, So nothing is hard difficult or impossible to him, *Mat.* 19. 26. *Mark* 10. 27. *Luke* 1. 37. Prayer layeth

(e) Jenkin on
Jude, v. 20.

(f) Cant. 6.

4.

(g) Est quada-
dam precum
omnipotentia.

(h) Orazio
longius vul-
nerat quam (a-
gitta.

(i) Ineffabi-
lem, superna-
turalem, super-
artificialem,
super omne in-
genium homi-
num, super da-
monum astuti-
am & facul-
tatem — Fi-
des & oratio
potestatem as-
quo virtutem
efficacia à Do-
mino accipe-
runt, ut ea
credamus esse
facta per fi-
dem, quæ nullis
aliis argu-
mentis fieri
possissent, at-
que illa orationi concessa, quæ omnibus aliis sunt denegata donis, oblati quæ muneribus, at-
que nullis humanis dignitatibus non porrecta, Simon de Cassia, lib. 9. de gest. Christi cap. 191.
Oratio est oranti præsidium, adversario incendium, Angelis solatium, Deo gratiarum sacrificium,
Aug. apud Archidiaconum sup. des. dist. 96. fol. 105. col. 3.

hold on Gods omnipotency, and engageth it in our quarrel: Hence (saith (e) one) *there is a shadow of omnipotency in prayer*; and are not praying Saints strong, and to persecuting enemies (f) terrible, *as an army with banners*? one praying *Elijah*, was (in the estimation of him who had learned of God to judge aright, and give to things their right name) *the Chariots and Horse-men of Israel*, 2 King. 2. 12. and wicked King *Joash* had so much light and conviction as to acknowledge the (g) same of his successor *Elisba*, 2 King. 13. 14. Ah! who knows the power and efficacy of fervent prayer? *Jam.* 5. 16. *Faith and prayer* (saith (i) one) *have obtained from God a supernatural and ineffable power, over and against all the policy and might of devils and men; So that those things have been done by faith and given in return to prayer, that no Wisdom, gift, dignity, excellency or strength could effectuate.* See *Heb.* 11.

You will say, nay, but the Lord works no wonders now, and my case is so desperate, that less will not do the turn. *Ans.* Albeit now a dayes we have no warrant to ask or expect miracles, yet his hand is not shortned; and albeit the doctrine of faith be sufficiently confirmed by the miracles wrought by the Prophets and Apostles, and though there be no extraordinary calling of men, requiring extraordinary dispensations to evidence that it is of God; yet, if Gods glory and his peoples good did as much call for miracles now as in former times, these should not be wanting; the Lord

que illa orationi concessa, quæ omnibus aliis sunt denegata donis, oblati quæ muneribus, at-
que nullis humanis dignitatibus non porrecta, Simon de Cassia, lib. 9. de gest. Christi cap. 191.
Oratio est oranti præsidium, adversario incendium, Angelis solatium, Deo gratiarum sacrificium,
Aug. apud Archidiaconum sup. des. dist. 96. fol. 105. col. 3.

is still what once he was, *wonderfull in counsel and excellent in working*, Isa. 28. 29. And albeit the popish *Legends* of their Saints miracles be apocryphall, and in many things ridiculous, yet there was scarce one age, since the dayes of Christ, that cannot furnish authentick evidences of the wonderfull works of God toward his children: Nay, the Lord can, by an extraordinary (though strange and astonishing to us) providence, bring to pass whatever can make for our good and happiness. Our extremity cannot be so great; that it may not be a fit opportunity for him to work; there is no case so desperat in which he cannot help, and far beyond our expectation *provide means* when the creature can see none, and *bless such means* as are at hand, though few and weak; and thus by an ordinary providence, work great and admirable things for the deliverance, comfort and happiness of his Saints; thy wound cannot be so deep, but his balm can cure it, nor thy disease and malady so great, but he hath a remedy at hand: and do not say, O I if I had been living in former dayes, when the Lord wrought miracles for his people; thou art unworthy of this *Gospel-light*, who wouldst once lay it in the ballance with those works of providence, which also were wrought for thee, and which thou (to whose hands an authentick Register of them is sent) oughtest to improve as thy talents. And as to thy present case and trial, neither thus art thou at a loss: for, 1. the goodness and mercy, the love and tender bowels of the Father, is the same. 2. His word and promises, his truth and fidelity are unchangeable. 3. The blood of Christ and his purchase, and so the title and right of his servants is the same, yesterday, to day and for ever; yes we, for our further comfort, have his intercession super-added. 4. The help of the Spirit to direct and instruct, to assist and strengthen, to witness, seal, comfort, &c. is now rather more then less. Since all things stand as formerly (and any alteration being additional and for the better to us-ward) our interest in God and in the blood of his Son, our right to the Promises, and to the Covenant the same, why may not our expectation and confidence be as great and strong, and Gods care and providence as sweet and comfortable as in dayes.

dayes of old? especially since our need, straits and difficulties may be as great, and Gods glory no less concerned therein, then at any time formerly; since all things thus stand alike, shall not the *evens* be the same? Though there may be some change in outward dispensations, and in the manner of working, yet the work and effect may be the same, as effectual and seasonable, as sweet and comfortable to us, and as unexpected, astonishing and admirable to enemies: and why then may not we, as well as Gods people and servants of old, lay hold on his omnipotency and infinit power for our stay and comfort?

4. Consider that title and name the word of truth giveth unto the Lord, he is the *hearer of prayer*, Ps. 65. 2. he is plentiful in mercy to all that call upon him, Ps. 86. 5. he will fulfill the desire of those that fear him, and hear their cry, Ps. 145. 19. And may we not have this confidence in him, that he will hear us whensoever we call? and may we not know that he will answer our desires, 1 Job. 5. 14. 15. &c. It is reported to the commendation of some States and Princes, that they never rejected any Petitioner; the Senators of old Rome did (1) judge it a great disgrace to the Roman State, that any man should have occasion to say, *that he had in vain asked help at their hands. It doth not become the Emperour* (said (m) the noble and magnanimous *Titus Vespasian*) *to send any supplicants ad from him.* Ah! shall the poor creature have such large bowels, and shall not the infinite Creator, the (n) *Father of mercies and God of all comfort*, pity all his honest supplicants? Shall it be below a generous Prince to send away any of his subjects sad from his presence, and shall not the King of Saints regard the prayer of his destitute ones, and hearken to their complaint? Ps. 102. 17. Such as never went to school, and know not how to frame an argument according to art, may without hesitation, from this encouraging principle (with the Prophet, Ps. 65. 2.) draw that sweet conclusion, *therefore unto thee shall all flesh come*, and may (if the fault be not in themselves) with confidence present their supplications unto thee. And who would faint in that exercise, that cannot want success? O! let us consider

(1) Rob. Cawdray
treat. of siml. pag. 548.
(m) --- *Ne quem sine spe dimiseret, nequans oportere quinquam a sermone principis tristem discedere* Cluver. Hist. epis. in Tito.
Vespas. pag. (mih) 189.
(n) 2 Cor. 1. 3.

consider the parable, *Luk. 18. 1.* with the several encouraging dissimilitudes, and let us no more doubt of Gods readiness to hear and answer our requests: particularly let us ponder how it was a burden to that cruel Judge, who neither regarded God nor man, to be petitioned; but the prayers of the Saints are Gods delight, *Prov. 15. 8.* they ascend up before him as incense, as an odour of a sweet smell, and a sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to him, *Pf. 141. 2. Revel. 8. 3, 4.* The voice of his petitioners is sweet, and as musick in his ears, *Cant. 2. 14. Rev. 5. 8.* Ah! why shouldst thou weary in speaking, since he doth not weary in hearing? what! though the vision tarry, yet wait for it, because it will surely come; it will not tarry. What strange language is this, though it tarry, it shall not tarry? But there is no contradiction; though as to our sense and apprehension it tarry, and for a long time; yet it shall not tarry one moment longer, than the fit and appointed time. The Lord waits, *that he may be gracious* unto us, and do us good; that we may be fit to receive, and improve every mercy aright, and that it may be a mercy and blessing indeed, *Isa. 30. 18.* And will we not suffer him to time our mercies so, that they may do us good? and if once the fit season were come, while his servants are yet speaking, he will hear: yea, and answer before they speak, *Isa. 65. 24. Pf. 32. 5.* Many a time hath our suit been dispatched, before we have presented it; the Lord in his providence hath met us in our way to the throne, and filled our mouth with songs of praise, instead of prayers and complaints; and hath given us not only what we would ask and desire, but *(10)* abundantly more; the Lord can do unto us, and for us, above what we can think or ask; and who dare limit, or set bounds to his Majesty?

5. If we consider what *persons* and *prayers* have met with success, it will seem very unreasonable once to doubt of the prevalency of the fervent prayer of the righteous; 1. for persons, we may for our encouragement call to mind, that the eyes of all things wait upon him, and that accordingly he giveth them their meat in due season, that he heareth

(10) Thus to Solomon asking only wisdom, the Lord did give riches and honour in great abundance, 1 Kings, 3. 9. 13. and to Hannah, asking one Son, 1 Sam. 1. 11. the Lord did give three Sons and two Daughters more, Ch. 2. 21. 10. Jacob asking only food and raiment, Gen. 28. 20. he gave two bands and companies, Gen. 31. 10. the

the moaning of brute beasts, and satisfieth the very natural and sensitive desire of every living thing, *Pf.* 145. 15, 16. &c. Hence, we may well argue with our blessed Master, if God thus feed the Ravens, and cloath and aray the lillies and grafs of the field; if he thus care for brutes, and satisfie the natural inclination and desire of these inferiour creatures, will he not far rather hear the cry, and answer the desire of his own children? *Luk.* 12. 24, 27, 28. 1 *Cor.* 9. 9. But, 2. as the Lord thus heareth the natural and sensitive voice of brutes, so also out of his generall bounty, he pitieth brutish sensual men, and often answereth them in the day of their trouble and extremity; thus he hearkened to the voice of *Hagar* and *Ismael*, *Gen.* 21. 17. of *Rehoboam*, 2 *Chr.* 12. 7. of *Ichabaz*, 2. *King.* 13. 4. of *Ahab*, 1 *King.* 21. 29. of (formerly vile, though then repenting) *Manasseh*, 2 *Chr.* 33. 13. of heathenish *Ninivah*, *Jonah*, 3. 10. of Pagan Marriners, *Pf.* 107, 128. of the proud tyrant *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* 4. 34. of dissembling and hypocritical Professors, *Pf.* 78. 34, 38. &c. Thus the Lord would testifie that high account he hath of the fervent prayer of his honest supplicants, in regarding the very picture and shadow of that ordinance so far, as to remunerat the same with the benefits of a common providence: which will be yet more apparent, if, 3. we remember what kind of prayers have not only met with a (p) bountifull return, but also have been graciously accepted, and have obtained a blessing indeed; yea, and not only when there hath been much weakness in the performance, but also some present distemper in the suppliant; thus he answered the desire of quarrelling *Moses*, *Exod.* 6. 1. *Exod.* 3. 22, 23. of passionate *Jonah*, *Jon.* 2. 10, 7. of *David* changing his behaviour, as if he had been mad, *Pf.* 34. 4. of *Abraham* denying his wife, and exposing her to so great a temptation, &c. And then for infirmities and weakness, as to the work it self; did not the Lord hearken to *Hezekiah* his chattering like a Crane, and mourning like a Dove, *Isa.* 38. 5, 14. to the Psalmist his crying and broken language, when his spirit was so overwhelmed that he could not speak, *Pf.* 77. 1, 4. to the prisoners groans, *Pf.* 102. 20. to the sighs of the needy,

greedy, Pl. 12. 5. to the publicans short ejaculation, Luk. 18. 14. If the Lord will hear the cry of weak ones, who cannot speak, will he then reject thee, whose mouth he hath opened to pour out thy complaint before him? But let none abuse this fatherly condescension of our God, as to imagine that it is enough, and acceptable service to God, if we can speak some few words in a dead formal way, without all life, and sense; which is the mad conceit of carnal and hypocritical professors; for though the Lord pity his sick children, and hear the sighs and groans of a broken and contrite heart; yet he will, in his wrath, break those stony-hearted hypocrites, who dare thus mock his infinite majesty with such superficial performances: and it would be remembred, that though there was no *spiritual* life and heat in those *natural* (as I may call them) sacrifices of *Abab*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, &c. yet there was a proportionable and suitable fervour, tenderness and affection in their supplications and complaints; in respect of which, they had the advantage of formal hypocrites, whose hearts (such as they are) do not joyn in the work, and who do not express so much as a natural affection and desire; especially while they are asking heavenly and spiritual mercies.

6. Let us consider the experience of all the Saints; and (g) carnal hearts are not fit judges in a matter, which as yet doth not belong to them, and therefore no wonder though they have no experience of Gods fulfilling the promises to themselves, (they not having an interest in them) the Scriptures and ecclesiastical history hold out many instances of (r) remarkable providences in return to their prayers; and as for particulars, he who would undertake to give a catalogue of them, might first go number the sand on the Sea-shore;

worlds end, the almighty and wonder-working power of prayer—that precious and almost, if not altogether omnipotent grace: *and citeth a passage from Chrysostom, De orando Deum, lib. 1. Deprecatio armorum est inexpugnabilis; ac tutissimum, nec nunquam fallens muni mentium; pari facilitate vel unum repellens militem, vel innu-*

merabilia hostium millia.

(g) *Da mihi Christianum*
or scis, quid dico.

(r) *Hence*
reverend Mr.
Bolton Just.
for right, conf.
off. sect. 1.

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Yea, there never was one Saint (though never so mean and weak) who hath observed the works of God, and the several steps of providence towards himself, but will put to his seal to this truth, that the Lord is *the hearer of prayers*, and such as converse with the godly, will hear them from time to time admire Gods bounty and care for them, and to proclaim his fidelity in answering their prayers, though mixed with much weakness and dross, and though sometimes through ignorance and impatience, they have (with Zion, *Isa. 49. 14.*) complained that God had forgotten them, yet ere long they became sensible of their mistake, and have been forced to confess and bewail their folly and unbelief, and to say (as there, *ver. 15, 16.*) that though a tender mother could forget her sucking child, yet the Lord could not forget his people, they being graven upon the palms of his hands: As we have the *Word* of him who is truth it self, and cannot lie, that he will alwaies hear, and give a gracious return to all the prayers of his honest supplicants, which is the *foundation of faith*, so every Saint hath his own *experiences*, which spiritualized *sense* and feeling may lay hold upon; and is there yet any thing wanting for thy comfort and establishment? is there yet any of the sons of *Zion* who dare doubt of the tender love and care of their Father, and (which is worse) who dare give God the lie? he may summond all his creatures, and put them to it, if there be any among them who can bear testimony against his Word. O! what an impudent and blasphemous lie were it, to say, that God had not kept promise? and yet this atheisme lurketh in the hearts of too many; yea, and so much of unbelief as lodgeth in the heart, so much also of this venom, which the old serpent did

Gen. 3. 12. (S) *spue* out upon our first parents, and which they too greedily sucked in; but after that we have cast out all that *poison*, and are perfectly purged; after that our eyes are anointed, and all mists of darkness are dispelled, we will doubt no more, and complain no more; after we are once entered in the light of glory, we will then clearly see our errors and mistakes, and will proclaim to all eternity the Lords faithfulness in fulfilling all his promises, and his bounty

bounty and kindness towards us, in not granting our foolish and sensual requests: nay, who did ever hear a Saint, on his death-bed (when carnal baits and worldly temptations could promise little, and furnish no contentment, and thus were not able so to allure, insatiate and bewitch, as formerly) who (I say) was the man, that entering upon the borders of eternity, durst challenge the Almighty for not accomplishing his promises? or who could say, that at any time he had called upon God in vain? All ages can give their evidences, and all believers will; and must sooner, or at length confess, that there was never a prayer put up in faith, that proved abortive; though all our labours and endeavours under the Sun, may be fruitless and to no purpose, yet prayer will never be as a (1) miscarrying womb and dry breasts, but alwayes proveth that good seed, which (though it may for a while lie hid under ground, yet) still yields good fruit, for the comfort and satisfaction of the sower. What is (u) said of the bow of *Jonathan* and the sword of *Saul*, is a fit motto of the prayer of faith; *it never returneth empty*. And this truth will not be called in question by any, except, when sense and carnal reason (these corrupt judges in the matters of God) do sit on the bench, and give out sentence: But ah! our unbelief, negligence and estrangedness from God, doth deprive our selves and the Church, of many mercies, and of much matter of comfort to our selves, of praise to God, and terror and astonishment to enemies.

7. If we consider the many, sweet and binding relations, which the Lord hath been pleased to undertake towards his covenanted people, who are true Israelites, and are sincere in their profession; if we consider how all the persons of the blessed Trinity are affected towards them, what is the love of the Father, the purchase of the Son, and the work of the holy Ghost, our doubting and unbelief will be most unreasonable; 1. then is not God our Maker, our Lord and Master, our Father and Husband, &c. And will not the infinite Creator care for his creatures, who depend upon him? will not the great Lord and Master of heaven and earth, care and provide for his honest servants? will not the Father of mercies

(q) *Quem enim invocamus? Patrem, Fratrem, Advocatum? Quomodo? Patre jubente, Fratresubstituente, Advocato impellente? Quam fiducia? Patre promittente? Fratrem adiuvante, Advocato testificante? Quid petimus? Hereditatem quam nobis impetavit Pater, ob signavit Spiritus sanctus, Gerhar. harm. Evang. cap.*

149.
(r) *By a most emphatick asseveration (which to many of the learned appeareth to be an oath) as Joh. 16. 23, &c.*

pity his children in the day of their trouble, and hear their cry? will not the Husband hearken to the voice of the Spouse, and grant her desire? &c. 2. As to the relations under which we stand towards the persons of the blessed Trinity severally; is not the (x) Father our father, the Son our brother and advocat; and the holy Ghost our helper leader and guide? and who will doubt of acceptance, welcome and success while his father commandeth, his brother inviteth, and his guide and counsellour perswadeth and allureth him to come and present his requests? while the father promisseth; the elder brother and heir reneweth and (y) confirmeth his fathers grant; our leader and assistant doth put that security in our hand, and is willing to engage with them in the same bond, and putteth to his seal and subscription, confirming their evidence, and adding his own; what place is there left for unbelief, doubting and fears? Especially if, 3. we consider, 1. the Fathers love; that mysterious love, in giving his only begotten Son to death, that we might live, *Joh. 3. 16. 1 Joh. 4. 9.* and shall we think, that he who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us, will not freely with him also give us what we shall ask in his name? *Rom. 8. 32. I say not (saith the Son) that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you, Job. 16. 26, 27.* I would not have you think, that you have no other ground whereon to build your faith, but my intercession, I will not pray for you to one who knoweth you not, and hath no respect to you, I will not pray for you, as if ye were enemies and strangers, neither should ye thus pray for your selves after that ye are reconciled to him, through my blood; after ye are become children, and mutually love, and are loved of the Father and me; Courtiers will confidently draw nigh to their Prince; and we have moyn in heaven; the King himself loveth us, and hath adopted us, to the crown; and will he withhold lesser mercies, and hide his face while we present our requests to him? But as the Father doth thus love us, and freely give, and by covenant dispose to us all that we can desire, or stand in need of; So, 2. the Son hath laid out a price for us, and by his blood hath purchased

thased all these things to us ; and ever liveth to make intercession for us, and to apply to us the merit of his death, and to put us in possession of all these good things which are the purchase of his blood ; ah ! we seldom visit the throne, yet Christ is alwayes there ; we weary in praying for our selves, but Christ wearieth not to pray for us ; our prayers are cold and without life ; but Christ doth not faint, nor grow remiss ; our manifold iniquities do cry against us, but the blood of Christ doth out-cry them : And since we come not in our own name, but in his, and ask not for our own worth & goodness, but for his sake who hath paid our debt and purchased our peace and acceptance through his own blood, and who doth concur with us in our supplications, why should we fear ? the Father alwayes heareth him, *Job.* 11. 42. and therefore must also hear us, with whom he alwayes joyneth ; the Father cannot reject us and our prayers, unless he also hide his face from the Son of his love ; which since he will not, and cannot do, we may rest confident and secure : but as the Father hath promised and freely disposed, and the Son purchased all the good things we can ask, So, 3. the holy Ghost doth enable, fit and prepare us, both to ask and receive, he draweth, and helpeth weak ones to ascend to the throne, and putteth words in their mouth, and teacheth them what to say, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. *Job.* 14. 16, 17. And will the Lord reject those prayers that are breathed into us by his Spirit ? but as the Spirit doth thus help us to pray, so to pray in faith ; as he helpeth our infirmities, by enlarging the heart, and filling it with spiritual affections, so also by working in us a child-like confidence, and making us cry (not only with the mouth, which were no great matter, but with the heart, having made an impression and sense of it there) *Abba Father*, *Rom.* 8. 16. As he leadeth the Saints into all truth, and putteth to his seal to the whole Word of God, *Job.* 16. 13. *Job.* 14. 26. so particularly to the promises concerning the success of their prayers, that if they knock it shall be opened, if they seek they shall find, &c. Oh ! what a blasphemy were it once to imagine that God could lie, and would not perform these promises ? or that the Spirit

Spirit of truth would put to his seal to an untruth?

The Lord pity and pardon our unbelief, that having to do with such a compassionate and condescending Lord, who hath stooped so low, and come so nigh to us, who hath held forth himself to us under the nearest, most amiable and engaging relations, and who hath taken upon him so many bonds to do us good; we, notwithstanding will yet doubt of his good will, and of his faithfulness in performing his promises: Oh! 1. what a dishonour do we offer to our kind Master thus to question his love, care and fidelity? 2. what a shame to our holy profession? 3. what a base return do we make for the many mercies we still receive? and, 4. what loss and damage do we bring to our selves? we expect little, and receive little; we will not trust God, and he will not satisfy our desires, *Jam. 1. 6, 7.*

Are ye now convinced of your folly and guiltiness, in thus distrusting the Lord? and is it the desire of your soul to have this evil cured? O! then, 1. ponder frequently and seriously these and such like considerations; if this were the matter of your daily meditation, if these things did sink down into your hearts, and did abide upon your spirits, they might prove a notable preservative against your unbelief, doubtings and jealousies. 2. Let us exercise our selves in the Scriptures; especially laying hold on such promises, as are most pertinent and suitable to our condition; faith must have a word of promise whereon it must rest, and the more express and particular that it be, our faith will proportionably cleave to it the more firmly; O! but what atheism must there lodge in that heart, that dare doubt where it hath this warrant, *thus saith the Lord*? 3. Labour to know more of God, his love, mercy, power, fidelity, &c. Ignorance of God, his nature and attributes, is the mother of jealousy and infidelity, but *they who know his name, will put their trust in him*, *Pl. 9. 10.* With what zeal and success did *Moses* plead from Gods attributes? *Numb. 14. 17, 18, 19.* 4. Since sensible demonstrations are so concludent, and prevail so much with us, who live too much upon sensible objects, let us observe and keep a register of the gracious

returns

returns from time to time made to the prayers of Gods people and honest servants. 1. Our own experiences would be kept on record; he who can say with *David*, the Lord hath delivered me out of the paw of the Lyon and of the Bear, will be able the more confidently to say, with him, *the Lord will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine*, 1 Sam. 17. 37. experience begetteth confidence. But, 2. we should also

observe the dispensations of providence towards others: 1. the Saints experiences are recorded in Scripture for our instruction, comfort and encouragement, *Rom. 15. 4*. If God regard the prayer of the destitute, this must be written for the generations to come, *Psa. 102. 17, 18*. the success that others have met with will encourage vs to follow the like course. 5. Let us be exact and circumspect in our walk; if our conscience condemn us we will fear the Judge; every blot in our life doth darken and obscure the promise, and dazle the eye of faith; when the Saints fall, their faith doth shake; guiltiness is the mother of jealousy; when we do ill we become suspicious, and are ready to question his love and kindness to us, when we prove ungrate and come short of our duty to him. O! but if we would believe without staggering, let us not halt in our walking; let us be conscientiously diligent in every point of duty, and (2.) *bold in all manner of conversation*, if we would plead the promise and ask in (a) *faith, nothing wavering*.

Hence, for trial, this will be a good negative mark, whereby we may know who cannot pray in faith; if we do not walk as children, we cannot call God *Father*, nor with confidence expect that he will hear us: What son will not be afraid and ashamed to look his father in the face after he hath dishonoured him? and how will he blush to mention that relation; and to call him Father to whom he hath not paid the debt of love, reverence and obedience? And if any perfidious and rebellious son should be so impudent as, with (b)

conspiracy, though he the traitor knew not that his conspiracy was discovered meet with this terrible repulse, Avaunt thou murderer of brethren and father; the kills of a father was not instituted for thee. *Belshazzar* thy Judge, &c. *Nich. Caussin*, holy court,

Antipater

(c) Every
reigning sin is
treason and
rebellion
against the
great King;
and interpre-
tatively Dei-
cide and Regi-
cide; and eve-
ry sinner doth
comply and
conspire with
Sathan, and
take up arms
for him against
his Master and
Lord.

Antipas, to offer to salute and kiss his father, he might expect such a welcome and reward as he met with from the hand of *Herod*, and to find the severity of a Judge in stead of the love a Father; and yet, are there not multitudes? Ah! how many are there, who have the boldness to deal thus with the father of Spirits? Who, *Judas*-like, with a (c) treacherous heart, dare offer to kiss him, in whom they live, move and have their being, who is their Father by creation, and who offereth unto them and entreateth them to accept of the inheritance of children? Such think themselves to be sons and dare call him father, though they have the heart of an enemy; such have a kind of faith, confidence and hope, which is nothing but presumption, delusion, and groundless imagination, suggested by the father of lies, and maintained and cherished by their own foolish and deceitfull hearts. This their faith is not built upon the word, it hath not for its warrant, [thus saith the Lord,] but only, [thus saith the murderer and great impostor; thus saith the deceiver and our deceitfull and deceived hearts] It doth not arise from the *Promises*, (as having no foundation there) but only from some principles of *Sathans Catechism*, which he carefully instilleth into the ears and minds of his disciples; and among the many articles of that anti-scriptural and cursed *Creed*, this (to our purpose) is one, [If we have some form of devotion, and now and then speak some few words prayer-ways, it's no matter how we live; our prayers will make amends for all; God is mercifull, and therefore (will Sathan say, and they upon his word think) he will pity his poor creatures and servants, and hear them whensoever they cry to him: nay, such will be ready to apprehend, that it were cruelty and injustice to reject such well-meaning supplicants.] We may not now confute that soul-destroying delusion; but what the Apostle said of *doubting*, *1. Tim. 1. 7.* may far rather be applied to this mad and desperat presumption and confidence, *Let not such secure, bold wretches think, that they shall receive any thing of the Lord;* though too many be ready to think they shall receive, yet, saith the Apostle, let them not think so, or if they do, they will but deceive them-

own souls; and whatever, for the present, may be the dispensations of a common providence, yet, ere it be long, they shall know and be convinced, that they received nothing in mercy and in return to their prayers, and nothing from the Lord, as their God and Redeemer: he was better acquainted with the mind of God, and did not mistake, who said, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*, Psa. 66. 18.

And it was an acknowledged principle, that he who was born blind urged against the Jews in his apology for Christ, *Joh. 9. 31* For, saith he, we (d) know, that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of him and doth his will, him he heareth: Neither would the Saints themselves think they were not concerned in this caveat; for, albeit the Lord will pity them in the day of their trouble and hear their prayers, yet, if they step aside from the approved path, the Lord will hide his face; hence the Psalmist having asserted Gods care of his Saints and People, and that he would speak peace to such; yet, he addeth a necessary caution and warning, *but let them not turn again so folly*; as if it had been said [though they were Gods people, his Saints and precious ones, who have prayed and wait for an answer, yea, though they have asked in faith and have met with access and acceptance, so that a message of peace is dispatched, and is (as it were) on the way towards them in return to their prayers; yet, if they should, through their folly, turn aside from God, and in that interim commit some known sin, he would recall (as it were) his former grant and draw back his hand, and would not speak peace to them who had made peace with sin.]

Now come we to some positive evidences and marks of the prayer of faith: And, 1. when the affections are much enlarged, when we meet with a gale from heaven filling the sails, we may, and usually do, expect that voyage will prove successful; when God openeth the heart, and filleth the mouth with more than ordinary boldness, fervency and liberty, we readily will apprehend, that he purposeth to fill our hands and will not send us away empty, according to that word, *Psa. 81. 10. Open thy mouth wide*, (but (e) who is sufficient for such a work, unless the Lord put to his

(d) Let bold sinners consider how gross their delusion must be, who, contrary to this known truth, dare presume and draw nigh in any ordinance without fear.

(e) Only he who is said to open the ears, Psa. 40. 6. Isa. 50. 5. to open the eyes, Psa. 146. 8. and to open the heart, (whose messenger and interpreter the lips are) Act. 16. 14. He only can open the mouth to ask aright, he only can open it wide, both extensively and intensively, and make us desire and ask great things; greatly grandia granditer, as loquuntur Augustij loc. cit.

Xxx

hand?)

hand?) and I will fill it; We may believe he will fill that mouth with songs of praise for his gracious answers, which he hath opened so wide in fervent and importunate prayers: when we have spiritual boldness in pleading with God, we will also have confidence as to the success; and therefore these are joyned together and both ascribed to faith, *Eph. 3. 12. We have boldness, and access with confidence, through faith.* If the Lord lift up the soul to him, if he quicken and inflame the affections with a more then ordinary ardor and zeal, we will not readily doubt of our acceptance; when fire from heaven thus falleth upon our sacrifice, we will be very confident: thus, *Psa. 27. we have both Davids fervency and confidence, One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, &c. v. 4.* this was his importunity; but then his faith did act strongly and vigorously, *v. 1. 3. 5. 6.* I grant our lusts may add wings to our desires, and be as oyl to the wheels, and make us very diligent in our pursuit: there may be a natural and carnal fervency and importunity, which will rather add to our fears, then make us in faith rest upon Gods word, love and care; but the difference may easily appear, (though we will not now prosecute it) because that holy zeal and importunity is, 1. spiritual, as to the motives and end; 2. humble, and joyed with much self-emptiness and denial; 3. tender of Gods glory and honour; and, 4. submissive to his will, whereas the natural importunity is, 1. carnal; 2. proud and selfish; 3. careless of Gods glory and interest, if it might be satisfied; and, 4. impatient, under a frustration and disappointment. O! let us labour to curb our lusts, and beat down this their impetuousness and importunity; but, let us cherish and maintain that holy and spiritual importunity, which is so acceptable and prevalent with God and profitable to us: and if we would pray more confidently, let us pray more fervently and importunately; when we are cold and formal in prayer, we cannot be very confident of success, as knowing a lazy and careless way of asking to be a kind of invitation to deny, *qui timide rogat desit negare.* Yea, the heathens, though they thought much babbling acceptable to God, *Mat. 6. 7.* yet, in their sacrifices, they

they had a shadow that might have served for comforting that folly; for, (f) they would not presume to sacrifice without fire, and if the fire had gone out, they looked upon that as a sign that Gods worship was neglected, and as a sad omen and presage to him for whom the sacrifice was offered.

(f) Neque enim sine ignis ullum sacrificium fieri licebat — Si autem mortuo carbone sacrificetur, signum neglectæ religionis fore, & perniciosum nemo dubitavit, Alex. ab Alexandro, genial. dier. lib. 4. cap. 17.

ni 2. If frequency in praying be added to fervency, as it may be a further ground, So another evidence and mark of confidence; without faith we would soon weary, I believed, therefore have I spoken, Psa. 116. 10. But will believing David faint and leave off, having once spoken? Nay, faith he, but I will continue instant in this exercise, and my faith being strengthened by renewed mercies, given in return to former prayers, I will call upon him as long as I live, v. 2. As in handy-trades, men would soon weary in following them, if no gain were reaped or expected; So the Saints would too quickly faint in trading with heaven, if they did not see their reward: and therefore, when we continue instant in prayer, when we constantly follow that course, and not superficially and perfunctoriously, but seriously and with the whole heart, our faith must be acting, and there must be some confidence that our labour shall not be lost. But there be two cases in which, after a signal manner, this restless importunity, diligence, frequency and continuing instant in prayer, doth evidence our faith and expectation. 1. When we meet with long and continued delays, if notwithstanding we continue and still renew our supplications; thus David, under his long-continued persecution by the hand of Saul, continued all the while busie at the throne, he would not run away from God because he seemed to hide his face, but rather maketh that sad dispensation an occasion to draw nigh to God, and turneth it in matter of complaint (not of, but) to God: as Psa. 13. 1. How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? But, if we ask, what kept David all this time from fainting? I have (saith he) trusted in thy mercy: his faith kept his head above the waters and sent him often to the throne. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, Prov. 13. 12. but when all other remedies prove ineffectual, faith will cure that dis-

case. 3. When we not only meet with delays, but also many discouragements and contrary blasts in our face, to make us steeke sail and give over; if we notwithstanding still follow our duty, and continue to wrestle with God in his Ordinances while he thus seemeth to fight against us by his providence, we must have our loins girt and our spiritual armour on, and above all, we must make use of the shield of faith in this great conflict; thus, while Christ seemed not only to fight the woman of *Canaan*, and not take notice of her or her request, but also to reproach her as a dog; yet, she continues to enforce, renew and pursue her suit, she being (according to Christ's testimony of her) a woman of great faith, *Mat. 15. 28.* Thus also blind *Bartimeus*, when checked and charged to hold his peace, cryeth the more a great deal, and will not be put off till he get an answer from Christ himself, because he *believed*; hence our blessed Lord ascribeth the whole work to his faith, *Mark. 10. 52.* If faith be strong, it will set it self against all discouragements, and, like an impetuous river, will overflow and carry down all ramparts and bulwarks that stand in its way; and therefore, *if we faint in the day of adversity, our strength must be small,* *Prov. 24. 10.* But, let none imagine, that while we say that the believing soul will not be beaten from the throne, whatsoever impediments and discouragements it may meet with in the way, as if we excluded the use of other means; nay, faith will stir thee up to every mean the Lord in his providence offereth unto thee, as knowing, that to trust God and to neglect the means, is to tempt God to work a miracle, and to provoke him to do no more for us, who would not improve what he offered for our help. O! but faith in the use of the means will, 1. regulate our choice and keep us back from all sinfull and unlawfull means, though our strait were never so great, and they never so probable, and promising. 2. Faith will regulate the use of them and will make us keep them in a due subordination, not relying or trusting in them, but only in God, who can, as he pleaseth, bless or blast them, and who can work for us though they were removed; and therefore, though all creature-help did fail, yet a believer could sing

and depend upon a word of promise, till the Lord did beat him off by declaring his purpose as to the particular, and then submission will come in the place of faith. 3. As faith dare not tye God to the means, So neither as to the time, way and manner of working; it dare not limit the Lord nor prescribe to him, but will securely rest upon Gods wisdom; love and care, and leave all to Gods disposal.

3. Quietness, serenity, calmness and composure of spirit after prayer, is a good evidence of faith acted in prayer; what can liberat the heart of anxiety, fear, sollicitude and carking cares? what can rebuke these storms and make a calm in the soul if the Lord himself do not speak peace to it, and if he do not fasten the hand of faith upon the rock of strength and defence, and cause the soul rest safely there; notwithstanding all the boisterous winds that may blow from without? *Deep calleth unto deep: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me,* saith the Psalmist: But what? had he no stay nor shelter under this storm? his faith discovered a rock, and unto that he did flee; his faith did close with a promise, which being pleaded in prayer, he elped a command for mercy and deliverance flowing from thence, *Psa. 41. 7. 9. 8.* And then particularly, he applyeth the remedy to this distemper, and chideth his own soul for being disquieted and cast down, having the cure at hand: What? O my soul, hast thou not put up a prayer to God, (v. 8.) and yet art disquieted? hast thou not faith? canst thou not hope and confidently expect a return of thy prayers? Oh I trust in God, and be no more troubled and perplexed: And to shew how groundless and unreasonable his disquietness was, he repeats this pathetick *Psalm*, thrice. *Psa. 41. 5. 11. Psa. 43. 5.* What made *Hannah*, who came to the throne with a sorrowfull spirit, go away rejoicing, and her countenance be no more sad? *1 Sam. 1. 15. 18.* She came doubting and went away believing; and now, knowing that God had heard her prayer, she looked no more sad. And what was it that supported *Paul* and calmed his spirit while he was buffeted by the messenger of Sathan? the tryal and temptation still continued, albeit he had prayed against it once and again; but was
he

(c) Rom. 8.
28.

table to some Saints to fall into some gross sin, to humble them and awaken them out of their security: No doubt the Lord can make the consideration of our sins to humble us, and become more watchfull and circumspect, and thus even make our sins (c) *Work together for our good*; which is a demonstration of the wisdom and power of the Physician, and proclaimeth his mercy and tender bowels towards us, that of our venom and poison he can, and sometimes will, make to us a healing plaister; but this is no warrant to us to prescribe such a medicine for our selves, *We may not do evil, that good may come*, Rom. 3. 8.

CHAP. IV.

Of cursing and imprecations.

Whether it be lawfull to pray for vengeance on the wicked; and on persecutors.
Rom. 12. 14. *Bless them which persecute you, bless and curse not.*

(a) Having in the preceding Chapter enquired, Whether we may desire any evil to our selves or to the people of God, we come now to ask, Whether we may wish and pray for any evil to the wicked and to our enemies?

Here be (a) here several particulars that need not be brought under debate; as that we may pray against 1. the sins of men, and say, with him, *Ps. 7. 9. O Lord, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end.* 2. Against the plots, counsels, machinations and interprises of the wicked against the Saints and people of God, his Truth and Ordinances, and say, with him, *2 Sam. 15. 31. O Lord, I pray thee, defeat the counsel of Ahithophel and turn it into foolishness.* And, *Ps. 9. 19. Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail.* 3. Neither will it be denied, that we may complain to God of all the wrongs and injuries, of the cruelty, persecution, threatenings and blasphemies of the wicked, with *Hosea 12. 37. David, Ps. 10. the Apostles, Acts. 4. 29. &c.* And this complaint will be found to have something of an imprecation in it; hence, while *Eliab* is thus complaining to God, and mentioning *Israels* apostasie, the Apostle saith, that he *worketh*

intercession against Israel, Rom. 11. 2, 3. Neither, 4. will it be denied, that we may pray the Lord to break the snare of prosperity and success in any evil course, whereby as with chains Sathan holds them at his work; nay, and upon supposition that otherwise they would prove incorrigible, and if there be no other mean to reclaim them, we may not only pray, that the Lord would not *further their wicked device*, Psa. 140. 8. but also, 5. that they might not prevail, and meet with success in the ordinary works of their hands; yea, and that *the Lord would fill their faces with shame, that they may know themselves to be but men, and might seek his name*, Psa. 83. 16. And, 6. we may pray that justice may be impartially executed upon malefactors, that King and Rulers would resolve, with *David, early to cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord*, Psa. 101. 8. We must so love the life of wicked men, as not to prefer that to Gods law, and the laddable laws of the kingdom, appointing capital punishment for gross crimes and hainous transgressors, that others may be afraid to follow their footsteps.

On the other hand its certain, that we may not curse, 1. without a cause, *Prov. 26. 2.* Nor, 2. for our own cause, and benefit of private and personal wrongs done to us; we should thus forgive our brethren, and not give way to the spirit of malice and revenge, *Mat. 6. 15. and 18. 35. &c.* And, 3. we must not curse our relations, nor cast off these bonds, whether natural, civil, or spiritual, under which we stand towards others; children must not upon any terms curse their parents, nor parents their children; people must not curse their rulers and magistrates, nor one Saint another, notwithstanding personal wrongs and injuries mutually received, *Exod. 31. 17. Mat. 15. 4. Exod. 22. 28. 1 Cor. 13. 7. 1 Cor. 6. 7. &c.* And therefore, that cursed crew of passionat creatures, who for a trifle will give their children, servants, or neighbours to the devil, must have their tongues set on fire of hell, *Jam. 3. 6.* and they must be acted by the devil, who is the father of envy, malice, virulency, and of all such cursing, *Jam. 3. 14, 15.*

These things being premised, that which may here fall under debate, is whether we may pray against, though not as they are our enemies, yet as they are Gods enemies, and the Churches enemies, and though not for their eternal ruine (as may appear from *Part 1. Chap. 7. Sect. 3.*) yet for their temporal destruction and overthrow, and that either indefinitely, not pitching upon any particular incorporation, or persons, with *Deborah, 5. 31. So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord*; and with the Apostle, *1 Cor. 16. 22. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha.* Or particularly directing our prayers against such and such enemies, as *Judg. 5. 23.* and when there is thus an application to such and such persons, whether we might curse them conditionally, though not absolutely, especially if with the condition a blessing be annexed thus [Lord if these thine enemies be incorrigible, destroy them in thy justice, and if not, reclaim them in thy mercy.] Here, I grant, there are far different cases, and that there is less hazard in praying against Gods enemies, then against our own enemies; and in the general, when condescending upon such or such a faction; and by way of supposition, If they be incorrigible, then absolutely, and upon any terms: Neither would I rashly condemn those learned and judicious Divines, who plead for the lawfulness of such maledictions, yet I should think it a more Gospel-like frame of spirit, to bless and pray for persecutors, than to curse them, *Mat. 5. 44. Rom. 12. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 9.* They wants not that example that Christ left us to follow when he suffered, *1 Pet. 2. 21.* But on the contrary, he left us the pattern, *When we are reviled, not to revile again, and When we suffer, not to threaten, but to commit our selves and our cause to him that judgeth righteously,* *vct. 29.* What? are not all men our brethren and (b) neighbours? and should we not then love them, and wish their good? how shall we then curse them, and desire their ruine? and if we will not forgive them their injuries done to us, how can we say, *forgive us our sins, as We forgive them that sin against us?* But if we would bless them, and pray for them, that would be an evidence of our sincerity, and that we had over-

(b) *Premium est omnis bono. vid. Amel. loc. cit. pars. 1. cap. 7. qui fratrem suum oderit homicida est hoc loco fratrem omnem hominem oportet intelligi, &c. August. de sanctis, &c.*

come that devil of malice and revenge that rageth in carnal hearts, *Mat.* 5. 45, 48. *Rom.* 12. 19, 20. Did not Christ at his death pray for his persecutors? *Luk.* 23. 34. and *Stephen* for those who stoned him? *Act.* 7. 60. And did not *David* fast and pray for his enemies (though at other times, upon some special account he prayed against them?) *Psa.* 35. 13. Nay, we may here allèdge the example of Pagans, when the Athenians commanded their priest to curse *Alcibiades* after he was condemned; nay, saith she, for I (c) was not consecrated a priest to (d) curse, but to bless?

But you will say, may we not pray that temporal judgments may be inflicted on persecutors; yea, and that they may fall and never rise again to molest and vex the Saints? *Ans.* There would be a difference put between private persons, and a faction or multitude; for though we may desire that a malefactor may suffer according to the law, yet we may not desire the ruine of a multitude; for though it be an act of justice in the magistrate whom the Lord commissioneth and sends against such a party, to fight against them, yet that sentence cannot be so orderly and deliberately executed against them, as when a process is legally led against a malefactor; and such a dispensation may prove a mean, through the Lord's blessing to prevent eternal ruine; but when a wicked faction are killed in battel, death eternal usually followeth their bodily death and overthrow. Yet I deny not, that we should pray for success to the magistrate in such an expedition, and that his enemies may not stand before him; but thus we do it only comparatively, that since matters stand thus, that either they or the magistrate must fall, we are warranted to pray, that rather they meet with the stroke of justice, then that the magistrate and those who are with him should be overthrown in the discharge of their duty; yet abstracting from such an alternative, we should not desire the suddain death and ruin of enemies, but rather that they may be scattered and taken captives, and have time to repent; the rejoycing of the Saints is not their ruine, but in the deliverance of the people of God, and the manifestation of the glory of God in helping his servants, and making

(c) *Precibus non imprecatori-
onibus consti-
tuta sum sacer-
dos, apud
Wendelin
Philos. mor.
lib. 1. cap. 10.*
(d) Or by
cursing but by
prayer;

(c) Pl. 76. 10. *the (c) rage of man to praise him, &c.* And there is no question, but that comparatively, and rather we may desire and pray that enemies may fall and be ruined, than that they should prevail and oppress the Church, and blaspheme the holy name of God.

2 Obj.

(f) August.

contra Fau-

sum & lib. 1.

20. &c. *Auf.*

De-

mini in morte,

cap. 42. optati-

vo (inquis)

modo ut sunt

praedicati-

vo.

(g) Numb,

11. 15. Job,

6. 9. 1 King,

19. 4. Jer. 20.

15, 17. Jon,

4. 3.

Again, it may be objected, that there be many instances recorded in the word of curses and maledictions uttered by the Saints against their enemies, and on the wicked; *Deut. 27. 14. &c. 2 Sam. 3. 29. Psa. 59. 12, 13, 14, 15. Psa. 69. 22. &c. Psa. 83. 11. &c. Psa. 109. 6. &c. Psa. 143. 12. Jerem. 17. 18. Lam. 3. 64. Hos. 9. 14. Ab. 8. 20. &c. Auf.* We will not say, with (f) *Augustine*, that these were *verba sine pradicantium, sine pradicentium, non vana imprecantium*. And that these holy men did speak so either by way of prophetic & prediction, or by way of edification and denunciation of Gods righteous judgments against implacable enemies; for the words are so clear, that they will admit no such gloss: But we answer, that all that is recorded in the Scriptures concerning the Saints, is not for our imitation; 1. nor their sins and infirmities, which are set down rather to be our warning and copy; and as to the present case, who will justify (g) *Moses, Job, Eliab, Jeremah and Ionah*, their praying against themselves, and cursing the day wherein they were born, and the man who brought tidings of their birth, &c. 2. Neither what they did upon some special occasion or warrant, as in the present case they might not only, 1. know who were implacable enemies and devoted to destruction; but also, 2. have some particular command, or some special impression and impulse upon their spirit, moving and warranting them to pray for such and such judgments to be poured out upon such and such enemies; and then we may suppose, that such prayers poured out by such eminent Saints and Prophets upon such grounds and motives, did flow from a pure zeal to the glory of God, without any mixture of carnal passion, malice and revenge. O N but its hard for us to pray against Gods enemies, especially if they be our enemies, and have wronged us, unless our hearts burn with wrath, envy and rage: and therefore it would appear

to be safest for us not to follow such extraordinary practices; but to walk by the rule commanding us to bless, and not to curse; especially since, 1. we can expect no revelation concerning the final state of any, and so may be ready to curse some elect ones whom the Lord purposeth to bless; and, 2. we cannot expect any extraordinary motion and impulse upon our spirits, unless it come from hell, or from our lusts; yet *he that* *not* (saith our blessed Lord to some of his disciples, who out of a preposterous zeal to imitate *Elisha*; would have called for fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans, for not receiving their Master) *what manner of spirit ye are of*, Luk. 9. 55. Let such then as will take upon them to imitate the Prophets in their extraordinary actions, be sure that they are led by the same spirit, and that they can produce the like warrant: But as for humble Christians, who dare not (b) exercise themselves in things too high for them, they would consider, that *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*, Jam. 1. 20. Our wrath and malice against men, may provoke the Lord to become as an enemy to us, and may hinder the execution of his righteous judgments against them; but it can do us no good, and them no hurt; O! but if we render good for evil, and blessing for cursing, then will the Lord bless us, and do us good; 1 Pet. 3. 9. and it may be no small comfort to us when we are suffering by them; with the Prophet, we can say, *remember, O Lord, that I stood before thee to speak good for them; and to turn away thy wrath from them who had digged a pit for my soul*, Jerem. 18. 26. Nay, according to the word of (c) *Sirach*, we must not curse Satan; and who curseth him curseth his own soul; and the Scriptures of truth tell us, that *Michael the Archangel durst not bring against him a railing accusation*; and shall we then dare to bring any railing accusation against our brethren and neighbours? When (d) *saith* (e) *And* *esse quando dicit, Deus deus malum*, &c. *saith* *quid dicit, Deum quod esse sciretorem, re-* *spicit ad Deum, nunc me in suis malis operibus irascit, &c. quare si voluntatem tuam* *haberem, te prius occiderem anequam venire, si tunc te dedissem inimicum, quid ergo* *male orando docet me quid non fecerit te?* &c. *August. ad sententiam, 1. tom. 10. fol. 256.*

(b) Ps. 134. 2.

(i) Eccles. 31.

27. *Quid dicit*

(k) Tu quis

es qui non di-

ligis? utiq;

tu qui, oras ut

homo moria-

tur, malum oras

contra malum,

et falsi es in

duo mali, illa

male agendo,

tu, male oran-

do; in malum

orando incipis

(fin.)

fin) thou prayest for evil to thine enemy, thou thyself comest evil, as he was evil by doing wrong; So thou now by praying wrong; and now thou takest to thee Gods office, and becomest a judge pronouncing the sentence, and wouldst have him to be the executioner and liſtor; but if the Lord had thus dealt with thee when thou wronged him and became his

(a) When, and how often.

(b) A' dia-
λεττω in
definitive,
fine intermissi-
one.

(c) Πάποτε,
semper, hac
paritula (in-
quite) legi
de loco & de
tempore dici-
tur.

(d) Ab εὐχῇ
preces.

(e) Ab εὐχῇ
quasi laudes
bona verba.

(f) ἵνα
orare should
inde mecha-
lim in bene-
ni, piet prece-
tes & Grati
euphonia
causa & ad
ingenium
signa com mu-
tarum.

(g) Because
they honour
one of their
number who
was killed by
a soldier,
and account
him a famous Martyr.

enemy, thou had not now been so complain of thy brother, ab! why dost thou desire the Lord to do that to others, which he hath not done to thee? Were it not better to imitate our Saviour on the cross, pitying and praying for his ene-
mies, &c.

CHAP. V.

When, how often, and how long, or how much time should be spent in prayer?

1 Thes. 5. 17. Pray without ceasing

WE shall speak to the first two branches of the ques-
tion jointly, (a) both being determined by the Apo-
stle, while he exhorted us to pray continually, (b) or with-
out ceasing, 1 Thes. 5. 17. And our blessed Lord Jesus pro-
poundeth a parable to this very purpose and end, that men
ought (c) alwaies to pray, and not faint, Luk. 18. 1, 10-
15, Luk. 21. 36. And the Apostle, Rom. 12. 12. Eph. 6.
18. Col. 4. 2. &c. But you will say, what is that to pray
alwaies and without ceasing. Ans. 1. We need not spend
much time in confuting the old, (d) Enchirides, (e) Euphemis,
and (f) Messalians, who are reckoned among the ancient
hereticks, because mistaking the scope and genuine sense of
these words, and looking to the meer letter, they did from
thence conclude, that Christians should spend all their time
in prayer, and never leave off that heavenly exercise. I find
these poor deluded men also called in reproach by many other
names, as (g) *Martyrdoms* (h) *Enthusiasts*, yea, and

as being Christ, or one of the Prophets, or Apostles.

(i) *Satanists*.

(i) *Satanici*. These are said to have lived under the Emperours *Valentinian* and *Valens*. I do not deny, that some subtle hereticks to cloak their pernicious errors, might plead for this conceit, as having a great shew of zeal and holiness; and thus *Alf. (k) de Castro, Danæus, Mr. Ross* and others, do father upon the poor *Euchites* many absurd and ridiculous opinions, but if any did only plead, that we should continue in prayer without interruption, though I would pity such a one, as being under a strange delusion, yet I would be loath to rank him in among the hereticks; it hath been *Sathans* design from time to time to make many hereticks and schismaticks, as by infusing the venome of pernicious errors into the hearts of men, and sending them abroad to spread that deadly poyson; so also by stirring up the orthodox and zealous Christians (whom he and his instruments were not able to seduce and draw from the truth) to over-do in opposing these errors, as by mis-constructions, jealousies, bitter and approbrious speeches, personal reflections, and upon the least difference in matters of religion to account and call men hereticks; thus making the breach greater, and driving them (who in the (i) spirit of meekness might have been gained and reclaimed) to strange courses and practises, for the maintaining of which, they fell upon strange principles and more dangerous errors then what at first occasioned the rent and schisme: As there be too many of the Popes canonized saints, of whom we may fear the worst, So there may be many in heaven, who are standing in (m) *Irenæus, Austin, Epiphanius, and Theodoret* their catalogue of hereticks.

But to return to the error of the *Euchites*, 1. the practice of Christ and his Apostles, of the Prophets, and of all the Saints in all ages; 2. the variety of lawfull callings, requiring a considerable part of time to be allowed for them; 3. the many talents we have received to be otherwise employed and laid out; 4. the natural temper and condition of the body requiring daily refreshment, by eating drinking, sleeping, and moderat recreations; 5. our manifold necessities and wants, which must be supplied by our care, labour

(i) Mr. Ross *Navar. pag. 208. Alf. de Castro ad. vers. bar. lib. 11. pag. 747. and Mr. Ross affirmeth, that they worshiped the devil that he might do them no hurt. So also Danæus in lib. August. de heres. in cap. 57. (k) loc. cit.*

(l) Gal. 6. 2.
(m) To speak nothing of the popish heresiographers, where the orthodox and most eminent Christians are reckoned to be the grossest hereticks.

and diligence; 6. the frailty and weakness of the strongest Saint on earth, and his inability to persevere in spiritual exercises without intermission; 7. the several duties both towards God and man, which we are obliged to perform in their season, and when the Lord in his providence offers us an occasion, and calls us to the doing of them; and, 8. the variety and multiplicity of other spiritual exercises, as meditation, conference, hearing, reading, &c. do so clearly discover the vanity of this dream, that we need not dwell any longer on that head; especially since the experience of the owners and abettors of that error (if (n) ever there were any such) might serve to convince them, how impossible it is to walk by that rule for the space of one day.

But (o) *Alfonso de Castro*, with this mentioneth a far more dangerous heresie, which he fathereth upon (p) *Pelagius*, viz. That it is needless and unprofitable to pray to God, since we are masters of our own lot, and have power and free will to do what we will. Albeit we would be ashamed to undertake the vindication of *Pelagius* (though supposed to be our country-man) knowing his doctrine to be most dangerous and pernicious, yet it can hardly be thought, that he should have the impudence as to profess such an abominable absurdity; but his writings not being extant, it is not easie to determine what he maintained in this particular; but *Jesuits* and *Arminians*, who are reputed to be his disciples, discern this impious dream; albeit the orthodox by a just and necessary consequence labour to fasten it upon them, as flowing from their principles concerning the power of free will, and the indifferency and inefficacy of divine providence. And I should think, that their patron *Pelagius*, can no otherwise

(n) The first
relater upon
a mistake
might occasion
the mistake of
others, and so
from hand to
hand it might
come to us.

(o) *Alf. de
Castro loc.
cit. bar. 3.*

pag. 749.

(p) But he
reflects not on
him, but
will have

Witcleff, Huss, Luther and other orthodox Divines to maintain that impious tenet, because they assert the efficacy of divine providence, and upon this account he should have proceeded to his brethren the Dominicans, who herein do join with orthodox Divines.

otherwise be said to have maintained the same; and the (9) testimony which a *Castro* citeth from *Austin*, to prove this to have been *Pelagius* opinion, doth say no more, but that his doctrine did destroy the necessity of prayer. But though there be few or none who have the forehead to avouch such an atheistical tenet, yet alas! it is practically owned by too many, and multitudes of orthodox professors are pestered with this heresie; for all such as restrain prayer, and make no conscience to call upon God, do in effect, and in Gods esteem, joyn with those Atheists, who said, *it is vain to serve God; and what should it profit us to pray to him?* Mal. 3. 14. Job. 21. 15.

Having thus spoken a little to these two extreame, now come we to enquire more narrowly after the meaning and genuine sense of the former exhortations, and to satisfie the case propounded; and, 1. some (7) affirm, that the scope of these words is to perswade us to be liberal to the poor, that they may alwaies pray for us, that by their prayers procured by our liberality and almes, we may be said to pray alwaies: But, 1. many have not whereupon to bestow so liberally to the poor; 2. neither do the poor alwaies pray for their benefactors; 3. if we speak of our ordinary beggers, their lip-devotion and mock-prayers, is a grievous provocation, and a profanation of the holy name of God; 4. we may not substitute a suffragan in the exercises of religion, nor think that their actions shall be reckoned to us while we do not concur and act with them, whatever profit may redound to us by the prayers of others, yet this doth not liberate us of any (8) part of our duty to pray for our selves; the command to pray (as the other commands and exhortations in the Word)

(9) *He citeth Austin de hæresibus, and I finde he place he pointeth as to be cap. 88. ubi hæc habet Aug. destruit etiam orationes quas facit ecclesia sine pro infidelibus ut convertantur sine pro fidelibus ut augetur eis fides, & perseverent in ea hæc quippe non a Deo accipere: sed a scriptis homines habere: tendunt, hæc Aug. de hæc. cap. 88. But I finde a more full and particular testimony in this purpose, Epist. 92. which yet doth only show that according*

to *Pelagius* doctrine, it will follow, that two petitions of the Lords prayer are needless, viz. *forgive us our sins, and lead us not into temptation*, nova hæresis & nimium perniciofa (inquit) tempestas surgere inimicorum gratia Christi caput, qui nobis etiam dominicam orationem impiis disputationibus conantur auferre &c. vid. loc. hinc epistola etiam subscribunt patres Concil. Milevitani, vid. etiam epist. 94. (1) *Apud Salmeron com. in evang. tom. 7. tract. 2. 1. in parabol.* (1) *Or for any time, so that when we may abstain, because others are employed for us*

is personal, and concerneth every particular man and woman; its a popish trick to substitute deputs in the matters of God; such as will intrust their salvation to the care and diligence of others, would take heed, least as others work for them, So they be crowned for them: *every one*, without exception of whatsoever rank or degree, *must* (t) *work out his own salvation*, Phil. 2. 12.

(t) Our work is the way in which we must walk to heaven, but not our money (as Papi's dream) where by we may purchase a possession there.

(u) Apud Salmer. loc. cit. pag. 1) 4.

2. (u) Others think that they may be said to pray alwaies, who have resigned themselves to God, and refer all their actions to his glory, who hearken to the exhortation, 1 Cor. 10. 31. and who endeavour in all their waies to approve themselves to God, and *whether they eat or drink, or whatsoever they do, to do all to the glory of God*; but this being so far sought, and so impertinent for clearing the present difficulty, it deserveth no refutation; especially since it is so general, and no more concerneth prayer then any other performance.

A third conjecture, much like to the former, is, that *he* (x) *leaveth not off to pray, who constantly doth well*. This is an old saying, and brought by many for loosing the present knot; the most ancient writer of those, I have known thus to interpret those Scriptures, is the famous (y) *Ausien*, and he who wrote (z) the old gloss, whom the (a) *Rhemists* and several other popish commentators do follow. But thus saith is confounded with other duties, and the scope and sense of the words grossly (b) mistaken, which do clearly hold out and recommend to us the practice of a particular duty.

(x) Non desinit orare qui non desinit bene facere.

(y) Aug. loc. infra cit.

(z) Gloss. ord. in Luk. 18. 1. & 1 Thes. 5. 17.

(a) We should pray alwaies

by faith, hope and charity, and by working the things that be acceptable to God. *Rhemist* on Luk. 18. 1. vid. etiam Aug. epist. 121. cap. 9. & Beda in Luk. 18. (b) Sed quamvis non inepte dici possent opera bona genus quoddam orationis, quoniam Deum ad misericordiam provocant, quemadmodum & mala opera clamant ad Deum, & iram ac furorem ejus accendunt, tamen hoc non proprie Dominum voluisse, cum ait oportet semper orare perspicuum est, &c. *Bellar. loc. cit. cop. 9.* (c) Beda in Luk. 18. 1, descendum est omnia qua iustis aequidum Deum geris & dicis ad orationem esse referenda.

prepareth and fitteth us for prayer, and when we exercise our selves in other spiritual performances for that very purpose, that we may be the more enabled to pray: But though we grant, that there is a connexion among spiritual exercises, so that one may fit and prepare for another; yet there is a difference and separation, and we may be employed in one, when we do not mind another; and as other spiritual performances may be helps to prayer, So prayer may prepare the heart for going about them; and yet we cannot be said to perform them when we are praying, and wherefore should we be said more to pray when we are employed in them? and the words do manifestly speak of prayer as contradicting from other duties.

A fifth conjecture, is that of the learned (c) *Austine*, who thinketh that we should alwaies pray, because we should alwaies desire eternal life; its true, the desire of the soul is the life of prayer, and that Christians (d) virtually, habitually, and as to the general bent and main inclination of the heart, may be said alwaies to desire eternal life; but it is as impossible at all times actually to desire eternal life, as alwaies to pray, and expressly direct that desire to God.

But, 6. that opinion, I find to be most common among popish (e) writers, is, that he may be said to pray alwaies, who prayeth in the *canonical hours* appointed by the Doctors of the Roman Church; we will not now digress to speak of their divine office (as they call it) and canonical hours, in which the (f) great *Suarez* hath employed almost a whole book; and though *Bellarmino* speak to that head in some few Chapters, yet he sends (g) his reader to one *Marcellus Francolinus*, who (as he reporteth) hath written a large volume upon that subject; but, I would ask,

(c) *Manet namque virtus hujus desiderii in omnibus quia ex charitate facimus*, Jo. de Thabia in voc. orare vid. citam, Tho. 2. 2. quast. 83. art. 14.

(d) *Sine intermissione orare quid est aliud quam beatam vitam ab eo qui eam solus dare potest sine intermissione desiderare? semper ergo bene*

a Domino desideremus, & oremus semper, August. epist. 221. cap. 9. & ven. Beda in collect. ex Aug. in epist. 1. ad Thes. 5. 17. *continuum desiderium continua oratio* — quicquid aliud agis si desideras illud sabbatum, non intermissis orare frigus charitatis silentium cordis est, flagrantia charitatis clamor cordis est. (e) Beda in Luc. 18. 1. Alf. a Castro loc. cit. Salmeron loc. cit. gloss. ord. Lyræ and the Remists on Luk. 18. 1. Rainerius in voc. oratio, cap. 7. Lessius de justitia & jure, lib. 2. cap. 37. lect. 23. & alii passim (f) Viz. tom. 2. de virt. & stat. vol. lib. 1. (g) Bell. de bonis oper. in parv. lib. 1. cap. 11.

(h) Cajet. in
Luk. 18. 1 &
in 1 Theff. 5.
17.

where Christ or his Apostles did prescribe these canonical hours? or whether these were known when Christians at first were commanded to pray alwaies? yet if that interpretation were purged of the popish leaven and superstition, applying the general particle *alwaies*, to all fit seasons and occasions, or as their (h) *Cajetan* speaketh, *homo congruus*, it may help to clear the meaning of the exhortation, and may be acknowledged to be one branch or part thereof, as shall appear.

Thus we have seen what others have said to little purpose, we now come to give the true and full sense of the exhortation to pray *alwaies*, and to answer the propounded question in the following particulars.

Concl. 1. Albeit we do not joyn with those Divines, who think the full importance of that exhortation to be, that we should constantly maintain a *praying disposition*, and alwaies be in a readines and fitness to be employed in that necessary exercise; yet we grant, that this habitual frame of heart and spiritual disposition, is supposed by that exhortation; so that, 1. we cannot alwaies obey it, unless we alwaies be thus in readines: For, if at any time the heart be out of tune, the occasion and season of prayer may offer, and then we are unfit to seek Gods face, what this disposition doth import, how necessary it is, and how it may be maintained, see *Part 2. Chap. 1.*

But you will say, may we not pray, though we be unfit and indisposed? *Ans.* It is, notwithstanding our unfitnes, yet our duty, and we must be doing, though then we cannot pray; that is, we cannot pray to purpose and successfully unless the Lord pity us, and in mercy remove those fetters we have wreathed about our neck; though then we deny not the necessity of such a *praying disposition*, yet the words do clearly point out the *act* and *exercise* of this duty; and the following words, *ver. 19. quench not the Spirit*, do rather hold out that point, for there (as *Diodati* observeth) there is a *similitude* taken from the fire of the altar which was to be kept continually alive and burning; and thus we should not suffer through our rebellion, impurity, ingratitude,

ingratitude negligence or contempt, the gift of the Spirit of grace to depart or be abolished in us, but should preserve it, nourish it, and make use of it.

Concl. 2. This exhortation doth clearly answer the question *when* we may pray, assuring us, that there is no time in which we are not allowed, and when we may not acceptably call upon God, and thus, *Exod. 20. 9.* the Lord saith, *(i) E'v aT d' d' i' s' y a' z' i' d' a' a'* fix daies shalt thou labour, and that ruler, *Luk. 13. 14.* faithfully repeateth, though he mis-applieth these words, while he saith, *there be six daies in which men (i) ought to work.* You see here the word of a *(k)* command, and a necessity mentioned, and yet they import no more but an allowance and liberty; as if it had been said [you are permitted and allowed to work and labour in any part of the six daies, but there is no obligation laid upon you to employ all that time in the works of your calling; for you must eat, drink, sleep, and may also spend some time in lawfull recreations, and ye must serve God, and set some of that time apart to seek his face, though as to the hour or particular circumstance, ye be not determined, but may use your liberty.] So while we are commanded to pray alwaies, thereby is clearly implied, that there is no time in which we are not permitted and allowed to pray and draw nigh the King, his door stands alwaies open, and we may enter in, and present our supplications to him; and this (as I conceive) is a part of what these words hold forth, though not all, nor the main.

Concl. 3. To pray alwaies, importeth assiduity and frequency in prayer; we cannot be said to do alwaies what we do not often; but there is nothing more ordinary with all sorts of people, and in all languages, then to express frequency by such a note of universality; so we use to say, that a child who often eateth, is alwaies eating; that a diligent student is alwaies at his book; and a laborious trades-man is alwaies busie at his work, &c. And the places of Scripture, in which the particle, *alwaies*, doth import frequency, are so many and obvious, that it were to no purpose to stay on citations, only let us offer some few instances in the subject-matter, and where:

(k) Yis Caje-
tan ibinketh,
that thele
words belong
not to the
command, for,
saith he, non
præcipitur us
sex diebus
homo opere-
tur, sed quod
septimo qui-
escat, Cajet.
in Exod. 10.
9. Non om-
nia (inquit
Aquinas)
quæ continen-
tur in lege,
traduntur per
modum præ-
cepti, Thom.
2. 2. quæst.
186. art. 9.

where the Saints are said to pray alwaies, and to ask such and such a particular without ceasing; whereas it is evident from the very context, that they did not, could not, without intermission continue in that exercise, though ordinarily and frequently they did so, thus, *Act. 10. 2.* its said that *Cornelius* prayed (1) *alway*; and yet he was a centurion, and must needs have been much employed in military affairs; thus also *Paul* professeth, that he prayed for the Corinthians (m) *alwaies*, or without ceasing, *1 Cor. 1. 4.* and alwaies (n) for the Colossians, *Col. 1. 3.* and (o) alwaies for the Thessalonians, *1 Thes. 1. 2.* and *2 Thes. 1. 11.* and (p) alwaies for the Romans, *Rom. 1. 9.* thus also the Apostle *Peter* protesteth, that he will put those Christians to whom he wrote, (q) alwaies in remembrance of those things which he had then mentioned, *2 Pet. 1. 12.* And will any be so absurd as to imagine, that the Apostle did nothing else but continually inculcat and repeat those things to them? but he tells them, that he would often and frequently thus admonish them; and zealous *Paul* sheweth those to whom he wrote, that ordinarily and frequently he prayed for them. And thus it is evident, that to pray frequently, is to pray (r) *alwaies*; and I find (s) many judicious and learned Expositors thus to interpret this exhortation.

Concl. 4. If to frequency be added *universality*, *constancy* and *equability*, there will be found yet some greater reason for this expression; and that it is so in this case, yea, and that there is not one, but diverse kinds of universality here, shall forthwith appear. And, 1. there is required an universality in respect of the *object*; we must not only in some few things, but in *every thing*, by prayer, supplication and thanksgiving, make our requests known to God, *Phil. 4. 6.* Hypocrites will in their affliction seek God early, when fear is upon them, God will hear from them, but otherwise they forget God, and do not regard the work

(1) Δια παν-
τος.

(m) Παντο-
τε.

(n) Αδια-
λειπτως.

(o) Αει.

(r) Semper,
i. e. frequen-
ter, vel fre-
quentissime,
Bonav. in

Luk. 18. his
verbis Domi-
nus & aposto-
lus nihil aliud
commendare
voluerunt, ni-
si perseveran-
tiam & assidu-
am aitem
orandi, quan-
tam maximam
habere possu-
mus, Bellar. 103.

Bellar.

vis. cap. 9. (1) Chryso. & Theoph. in 1 Thess. 5. 17. Bonav. &
ar. ubi supra lib. 1. cap. 1. cum multis alijs

of his hand; but the Saints, as at all times, So in every thing, will present their requests to God, knowing, that every (1) creature must be sanctified by the word and blessing of God, and by prayer, 1 Tim. 4. 3, 5. Ah! did sinners know their danger, not only from Sathan, but from the meanest of the creatures, they would not go abroad without the shield of prayer? A stone lying in thy way, may occasion thy neck-break, and the least morsel of bread thou puttest in thy mouth may choke thee; O! what a mercy then must it be to have the very stones and beasts of the field in league and at peace with us? Job, 5. 23. and how carefull should we be to improve this covenant by frequent prayer to him, who is the preserver of man and (u) beast.

3. There is an universality in respect of time, and that being the most proper and pertinent to the present purpose, we will insist on it at greatest length; for, if it can be made appear that we should pray at all times, it will be manifest, that we ought to pray alwaies. Now as time in humane (x) writings, So also in Scripture is put to signifie the fit season, occasion and opportunity of doing, as frequently in the book of Ecclesiastes; and as there is a season and fit time for every thing and purpose under the heaven, in which is beautifull, Eccles. 3. 1, 11. So prayer hath its seasons and fit time in which it should be performed, and in which it will be beautifull, and an (y) odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing to God. And as it doth very much contribute to the beauty and acceptance of prayer, that it be performed seasonably, So we are obliged to observe and improve every season and opportunity; when ever the Lord opens the door and calls upon us, either by his word or work, if we do not answer his call, and improve this talent, then are we sinfully deficient, and omit our duty; when we let the fit season and opportunity of doing pass, then are we idle and negligent, and then become we guilty and culpable: And thus the (z) moralists and School-men do rightly teach, that an omission cannot be imputed to us, but when we are called and obliged to do, and do not; or when we suffer the occasion and season of doing to pass: yea,

(1) *stude colligendum est usurpationem omnium donorum Dei nisi ad sit vera cognitio & invocatio nominis Dei; ac beluinum esse vescendi morem, quum homines sine ulla precatione ad mensam ingerunt ac bene saturati sepulta Dei mentione alio se pruripiunt.*
Calv. in 1. Tim. 4. 5.
(u) Pl. 36. 6.
(x) *And in ali linguaas, thus the Latin tempus, the Græc and the Hebrew doth signifie the fit season and opportunitie.*

(y) Phil. 4. 18.
(z) *Id. (scholastic in 1. 2. de hac questione fusi us forte diffusi sumus loco they citato.*

they do not only affirm, that otherwise an omission is not imputed as our sin, but that it should not upon any account be imputed to us, or esteemed ours, and therefore ought not, in respect of us, fall under any moral denomination, or be accounted voluntary or free, neither should we in respect of it come under any moral consideration, or by it be thus denominated: And if it were not thus (at least as to any culpable imputation, which is the point we now press) how many thousand omissions of good might every moment be charged, not only upon weak sinfull men, but also upon the glorious and holy Angels, who are able to do many things which they do not, for want of this call and opportunity of doing. Hence, since the omission and not doing of any duty cannot be imputed to us as an interruption or intermission on our part, except when we are (a) obliged, called, and have a fit opportunity to do; therefore it is evident, that we may be well said to do *alwayes*, what we do at all times and seasons of doing; and that he may be said as to pray alwayes, So *without ceasing*, who prayeth as often he hath opportunity, and is called to that exercise; for thus there is a moral continuation without any ceasing or intermission on his part, he being then only concerned in that duty, when the fit season is offered, and then he will alwayes be doing.

(a) *Præcepta affirmativa obligant semper sed non ad semper, & ideo solum pro tempore illo aliquis cessando ab actu peccat, pro quo præceptum affirmativum obligat,*
Thom. 1. 2. *quæst. 7. art. 3. ad 3. vid. etiam quæst. 100. art. 10*

But you will ask, what be these seasons of prayer which we must observe and improve? *Ans.* There is a twofold season of prayer, one *constant*, another *occasional*; 1. then as to the constant season of prayer, which every Christian should daily make use of, albeit we will not limit or prescribe to the Saints, yet we hope, that without hazard of a challenge from any sober Divine, we may affirm, that the least which the word of God will admit for a set course of prayer, is twice a day; as our daily wants, necessities, trials, temptations, will so often, at least send us to the throne for a supply, protection, deliverance, &c. So our mercies for their continuance and the sanctified use of them; and if we have the heart of Children, we must so often at least visit and speak with our Father; and if we be sensible of our enjoyments

enjoyments, and of his mercy and tender bowels, we will
to often, at least, offer to him the sacrifice of praise, &c. And
we cannot be said to do (b) alwaies, what we do not often
and frequently; and can he be said to pray often or frequently,
who doth not at least keep a constant course of praying twice
a day?

(b) As in the
preceding con-
clusion hath
been shown.

But if it be askt what time of the day is fittest? *Ans.*
Though we will not be peremptory in fixing upon any part
of time, yet it would appear, that evening and morning
were the fittest seasons; is it not equal, that we begin and end
the day in Gods worship and service? and how dare we sleep
untill we commend our selves, and all that is ours to the
care and custody of our Father? and how dare we put our
hands to any work in the morning till we praise him for our
preservation in the night past, and beg his blessing on the
works of that day? and thus both our need, and the honour
of our Master call for this; for what we highly prize and
love dearly, will get the first and last of our thoughts, it
will, as it were, sleep and awake with us; and shall not the
Lord have that room in our heart? is there any better object
to fill it? and can the first and last of our time be better em-
ployed? The Jewish daily sacrifice was appointed to be of-
fered in the morning and evening, *Exod. 29. 39.* and these
are fit seasons for the Christian sacrifice, and accordingly the
Saints from time to time have observed those seasons, though
with some variety: But I should think, that as the morn-
ing and evening, So the first of the morning, and the last at
night were due to the Lord; and if our calling, or some
occasional diversion, do hinder the family from meeting toge-
ther, every one should then go to their closet, and pour
out their soul before the Lord, till the family may most
conveniently meet together to joyn in that exercise.

But ye may yet ask, what warrant we have from the
Scriptures to press this? *Ans.* We did not say, that this
was all which the Scripture doth require, but that this was.
The least which from thence could be allowed and established.
The Lord in his Word requireth, that we should pray alway
and without ceasing, but doth not determine how oft, that

Quest.
Ans.

Quest.
Ans.